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CHANEL







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DAISY MARC JACOBS

EAU SO FRESH



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I hope you're lucky!



Forget those grey skies, today is the day *Cosmo* is going to bring a big ray of sunshine into your life. In case you hadn't noticed (go back and look at our gorgeous cover again!), we are desperate to give

away £1million to a lucky reader. Eager beavers can turn straight to page 84 for details, but if you fancy daydreaming a while longer, just imagine what you would do with it. Travel round the world with your friends... buy a stylish penthouse... clear out Topshop... drape yourself in diamonds, or maybe set up your own dream business?

The good news for me is that I already have the best job in the world; the bad news is that means I have to carry on working! I'm not sure how I'd react to having all that money. Would I just go bonkers down Bond Street, buying more Chanel, Prada and Louis Vuitton than my little hands can carry? Or become a tightwad miser counting my money while I feasted on Tesco Value baked beans? Sadly I'll never know as I'm not allowed to enter the competition. But you are. And if you win and can't carry all those Mulberry, D&G and Miu Miu handbags, you know where they'd be given a good, loving home...!

Good luck!

Laise

Louise Court, Editor

Follow me on Twitter at twitter.com/LouiseCosmoEd

Miss Cosmo, miss out

Things I didn't know until this issue

Citizen stalkerazzi has led to a whole new trend in A-list partying. *Cosmo* takes you behind the scenes on p62.

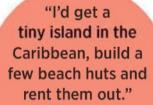
That shoes and bags really do rule a girl's heart... Cosmo staffers have been in fashion-cupboard awe this month – turn to p150 and you'll see why!

When

they love the 'natural look', they're not quite talking 'bed hair' and makeup-free... Go to p184 to find out how to get that gorgeous glow he adores, with just a little help.

The extreme wedding obsession has spawned a scary new female. See p42 – and run for your lives!

What would we do if we won £1million?!



CLAIRE ASKEW, DEPUTY EDITOR

"I'd buy a brilliant horse, as well as lessons from a top trainer, and make it on to our Olympic threeday-event team!"

> Michaela Twite, Chief Sub Editor

"I would buy a house in Montenegro, a family of micro pigs and a year's supply of cheese."

FIONA COWOOD, FEATURES DIRECTOR

"I'd buy my first pair of Louboutins and a lifetime's supply of Mulberry bags."

Victoria Dimmick, Designer



Turn to p84 for your chance to win £1million! Good luck!

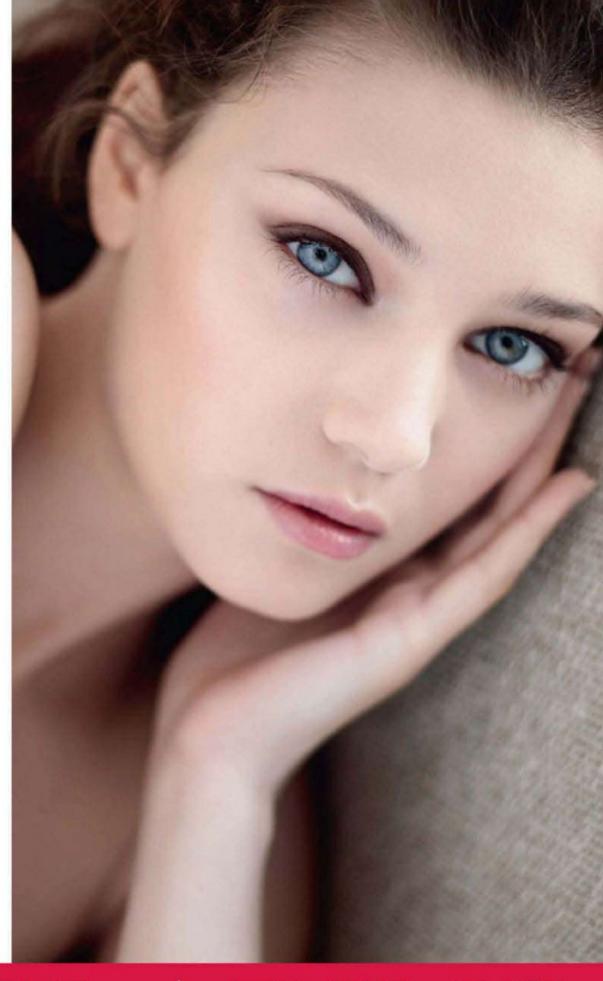
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"I wanted to say thank you for your article on Nicky Oram, 'The Man Who Groped Me Was A Violent Rapist' (February), who helped send the rapist who groped her in a nightclub to jail. I had a similar experience four years ago. I was sitting on a bus when a man put his hand up my skirt. I

didn't report the incident because I felt vulnerable and confused. I now regret my decision and applaud Nicky for her bravery. I wish I'd done the same." Name withheld

Good for you, Kelly!

"It was inspiring to read your interview with Kelly Osbourne, 'I Was An Emotional Eater' (February). Hearing how she's overcome so many obstacles to take control of her weight and life shows what can be done with determination. Kelly's down-to-earth attitude is easier to relate to than some other celebs, so her advice feels more relevant. With similar efforts we can all make the best of what we have and look as good as her." Amber, Winchester

Celeb success story

"At a time when it's all too easy to be weight-obsessed, I applaud Kelly Osbourne. Backing out of a gastric band and choosing instead to educate herself about food - and get healthy the hard way - can't have been easy, especially for someone who can afford surgery. Her honest outlook is refreshing in comparison to other stars who stick to the 'carrot a day' diet. She's a role model."

A lesson in love

"I've just read A Very Special Love Story (February) and it has restored my faith in people. Reninca and Carwyn Hill are an amazing couple - beaming with love and with a real zest for life. I was so pleased to read they'd shunned the commercial extravagance of Valentine's Day to help other people. I did too, and made a donation to their appeal. Their story is a lesson for us all." Davina, Berkshire

Wedding belle

"I was so happy to read that your Sex And The Not So Single Girl columnist Fiona has got engaged! Her column is the best bit of Cosmo as I can often see my relationship reflected in her writing. This month she got me thinking about when my boyfriend might propose. Only time will tell. But for our anniversary, he's taking me to a 'secret location', so who knows? Congrats, Fiona!"

Aimee, Oxford

* What's your favourite bit of Cosmo?

Web

News

Pat McNulty. Cosmo's Acting Web Editor. reveals what you've been



discussing this month on

www.cosmopolitan.co.uk

Happy with your life?

"My life isn't how I planned it, but I wouldn't change a single thing!" Clarebear...

"I don't love not having money, but I focus on what I do have, and believe other things will come in the future!" Bzzzzzzz

"I have a great family, good friends, am healthy... I've taken risks, but have no regrets, so I'm very happy." Ruth Williams

Your inner wild child

"Probably takes a few vodkas - or if not, a dance floor - and then she's unleashed!" Crystal Vision

> "I go a little bit wild in airports. I get excited and love flying!" Little.Miss.Arrbee

Miss or Ms?

"I like Ms because it can be used regardless of being single or married." Mooey

> 'I prefer Miss because that's what I get when I'm teaching!" Laenri

"I've been called Madam by a police officer before - but he was a yummy one!" CrazyMademoiselle



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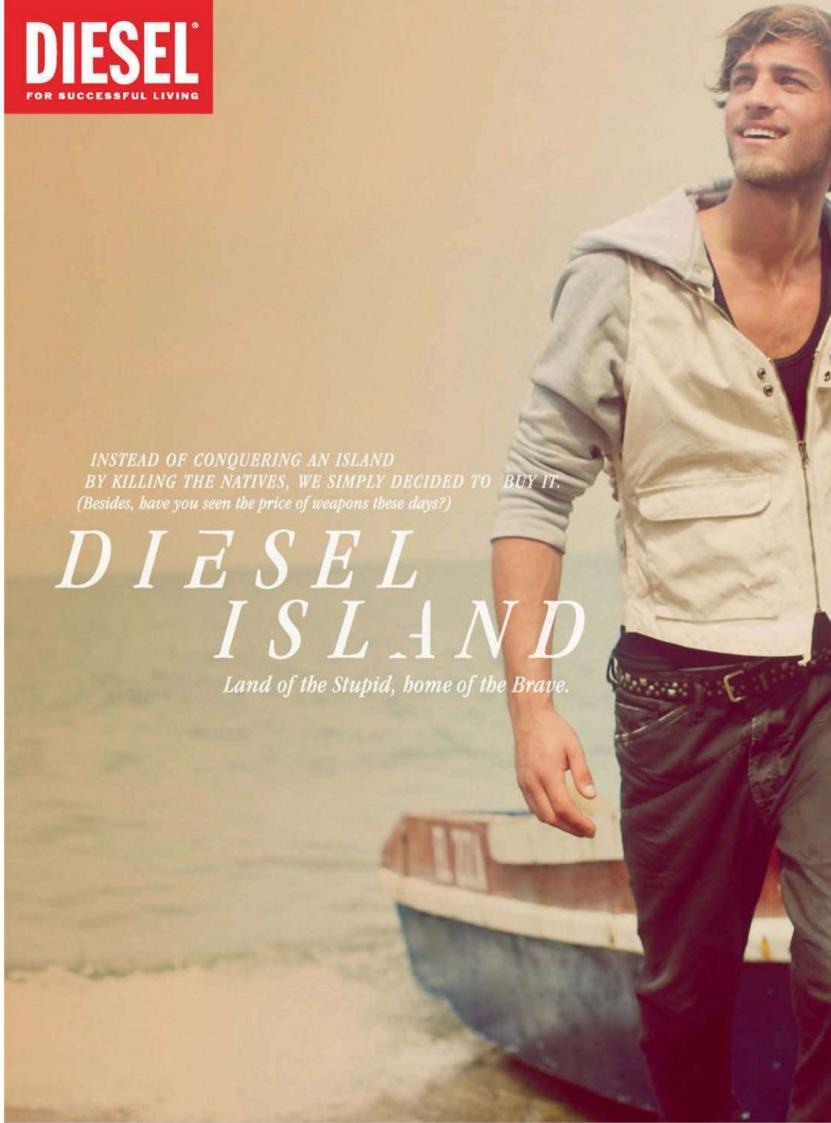
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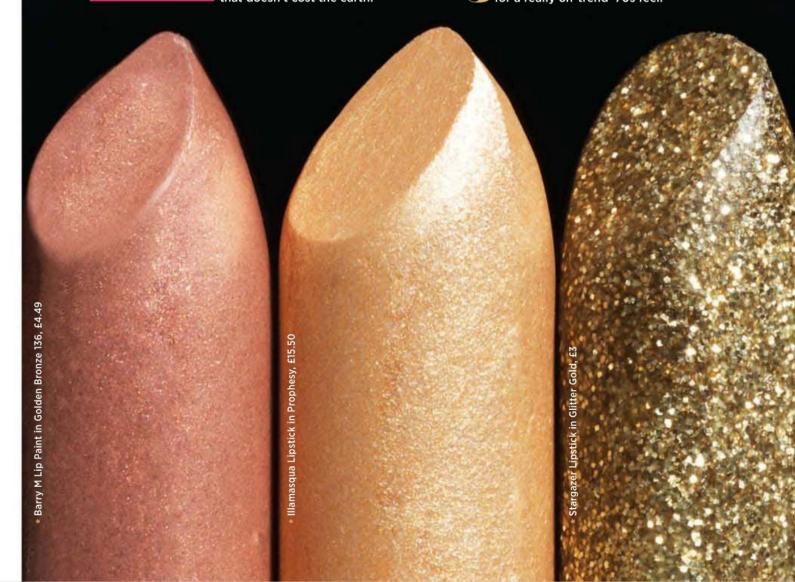
Cosmos Equation of the Cosmos of the Cosmos

Metallips

Everyone you kiss will turn to gold with this blingin' spring trend, which began on the NYC catwaks. OK, so it's more apt for a holiday in lbiza than a vino down your local, but we *love* this expensive look that doesn't cost the earth!

Three ways to work a million-dollar mouth, courtesy of makeup artist Lisa Valencia

- Gold lipstick works best on bronzed skin, so if you're far from sun-kissed, apply some fake tan to your face first.
- Keep the rest of your face neutral.
 Gold lips can be really flattering,
 as long as they're the main focus.
- Add a nude lipgloss over the top for a really on-trend '70s feel.







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JACQUI MEDDINGS.

Beauty guru Benefit has made it its mission to help you find your Mr Bright, or rather Mr Right, with this new booster box of makeup. It contains a mini Erase Paste, Girl Meets Pearl, Posie Tint and High Beam, which will have you glowing with so much gorgeousness he'll be lining you up for a second date before you've ordered your starter!

> £28.50, available from April (www.benefitcosmetics.co.uk)

Cool gadget

The sWaP Rebel (£199, Amazon) might look like an ordinary watch, but it's also a tiny mobile phone. Complete with in-built stylus and a USB port, use it with your Bluetooth headset to feel like a female James Bond.

SO



Mean gadget

Scales are cruel at the best of times - but these wi-fi bathroom scales (£100, www. withings.com) are positively sadistic, tweeting your weight when you step on them. Motivating or just excruciating?

Tribal trends

Wallflowers turn away now... hair just went technicolour with a tribal twist! Loud and proud shades were all over the spring shows, with Issey Miyake, Meadham Kirchhoff and Joseph Altuzarra all using blocks or streaks on their models. If you fancy experimenting (or just scaring your boyfriend), we love the new Fudge Paintbox Collection, £8.95 (www. fudge.com). Or channel the tribal trend through your wardrobe instead, as seen on the catwalks at Roberto Cavalli and Diesel Black Gold...



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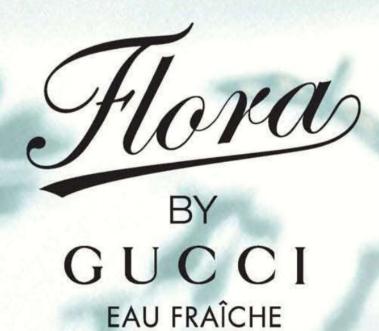
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THE NEW FRAGRANCE

Everyone's TALKING ABOUT...

Cosmo's guide to this month's hottest sounds, books and films

... BOYS, BOYS, BOYS

When it comes to cinema visits with our other halves, we usually operate on a 'one for you, one for me' policy. But we'll happily share our popcorn for these fab films. Hall Pass is a comedy starring Owen Wilson and Jason Sudeikis as men given permission by their wives to do whatever they want for a week. The Lincoln Lawyer stars hot Matthew McConaughey as a lawyer who gets embroiled in a high-profile case, in a twisting drama that'll keep you guessing. And Source Code is a mindbending thriller that sees Jake Gyllenhaal repeatedly

jumping,

Ouantum

Leap-style, into the body of a man with eight minutes to live.

... THE INBETWEENERS (BUT HOTTER)

We've missed The Inhetweeners and their awkward antics on our TV screens, but not anymore. No disrespect, but now they've got too big for the small screen (they're doing a movie), we've found a new funny foursome to LOL at. Hailed as the US equivalent, Glory Daze follows four freshmen as they embark on college life. There are mishaps with girls and genitals aplenty, but when these guys get naked, we might need a lie-down! They're distinctly more Abercrombie & Fitch than Will and co. On E4 from mid-March.





TASTY PERRY'S EDIBLE OUTFITS

Katy Perry is coming to town in all her cotton-candyclad glory to kick off her UK tour in London on 17 March. But as much as we love Katy and her cheeky, addictive pop songs, what we really can't stop talking about/ gawping at is her super-amazing wardrobe. When announcing her tour, Katy teased male tastebuds everywhere, admitting, "It's an edible-looking tour with meat and candy. It'll look like a smorgasbord of them." Watch out for Katy and her fridge-cumwardrobe of outfits hitting a town near you.

THE FUTURE QUEENS OF CHICK-LIT Keyes, Colgan, Aberne: all

amazing writers. But what about the next generation of fab, female-friendly authors? Here's our pick from the new rising stars



Screen

dreams:

and Owen

Jake, Matthew

> Lizzy Harrison Loses Control by Pippa Wright (£6.99, Pan)

Lizzy Harrison is the perfect antiheroine – she doesn't own a cat, has no more shoes than the average person and isn't scatty.

But when you get under her skin, she's every bit as lovable as some of our favourite chick-lit icons. Follow her as she tries to find Mr Right while keeping a grip on her immaculately ordered life.



Cougars by Claire Irvin (£6.99, Sphere)

Knowing how much hard work, sweat and tears go into making *Cosmo* (ahem), we're not sure how *She* editor Claire found time to pen her first novel. But we're

very glad she did. After getting married and launching a glittering career, Caroline Walker then finds herself suddenly single – and on the prowl for a younger man. Sassy and smouldering, we loved it.

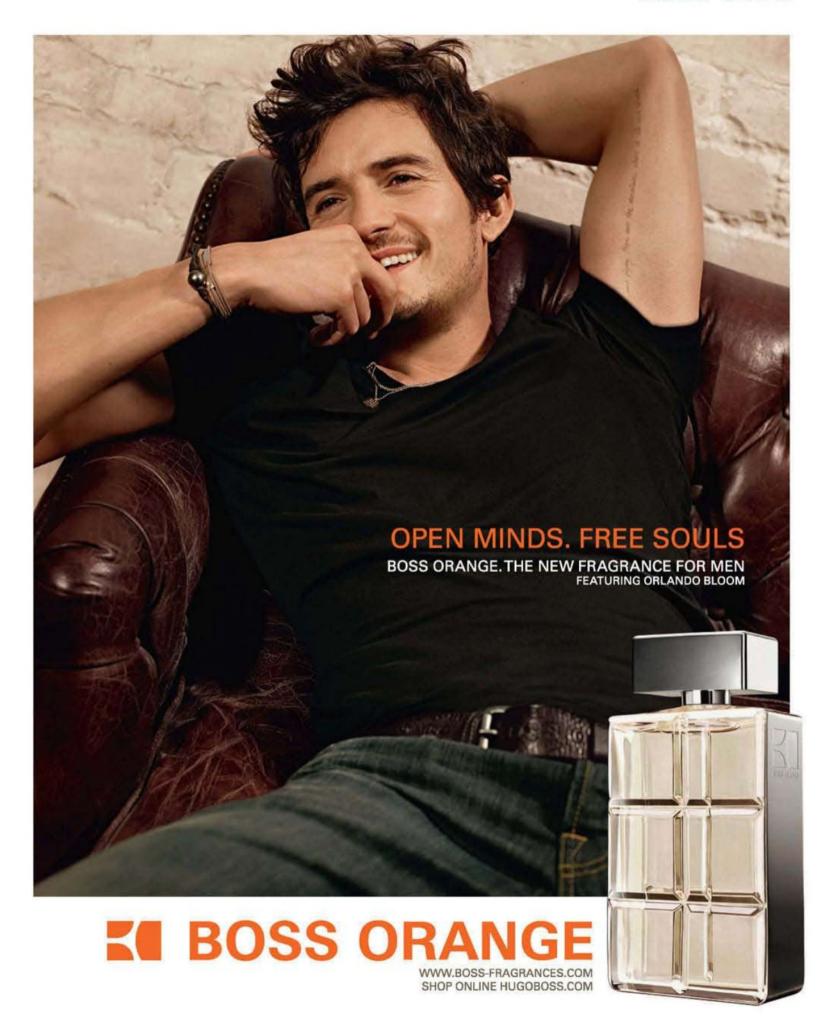


RSVP by Helen Warner (£10, Simon & Schuster)

This is the most gripping chick-lit we've read in a long time – and we've got the injuries from walking into lamp posts to prove it. Anna is still mourning her split from

Toby – the love of her life – who is due to marry another woman, Rachel. Throw in gold-digger Ella, and you've got an explosive mix. As bubbly as a glass of champagne, you'll adore every page.





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NEW









"Shocked, I ran screaming into the street. As I collapsed on the pavement, concerned neighbours surrounded me. 'What's the matter?' they asked. I was too distraught to utter the awful truth. Then my granny, who lived a few doors down, rushed over. I was ushered into her house and the day became a blur of police and ambulances. I couldn't stop crying.

"Later that day a policeman sat me and my grandparents down and explained that Mum had been murdered the night before. As we struggled to take it in, he promised they would do everything they could to find her killer. For the next few days, as they started their investigation, I shut down my emotions. While everyone around me was crying, I refused to. I felt that if I let it sink in then it would be real, and I couldn't handle that. So I focused on helping the police.

"Just five days later, a 23-year-old man, Kristoff Alauya, was charged with the murder. The police said Mum had brought him back to our home after she and a friend had met him in a nightclub. That was when he'd attacked her. Knowing they'd found Mum's killer was a small relief. But it wouldn't bring her back.

"I couldn't face going back to our flat so I moved into my grandparents'. The next week, at Mum's funeral, I finally allowed myself to cry again. We covered her coffin in pink flowers and hundreds of people turned up to say goodbye. She was so loved, it was impossible to understand why we'd lost her so soon.

"Over the next two years, as we waited for the trial, I tried to carry on with life for Mum's sake. I needed to do well at school so I could go to uni like she'd have wanted. But some days I struggled to get out of bed. I missed her so much. Little things were a comfort, though. Mum always fell asleep listening to the radio, so I cherished the songs that reminded me of her - soul music like Luther Vandross. And people who knew







her would always say how alike we were, especially our smiles. My family and my boyfriend Raymond were a constant support too. Talking to them about Mum helped me deal with my grief.

"In January 2009 I went with my grandparents to Belfast Crown Court to see Alauya go on trial for murder, rape and theft. The court heard how Mum and her friend had gone to Skye nightclub after the gig, where they'd met

him and three other men. They all left in a cab together, then Alauva went back to our flat with Mum. In a brutal sex attack he stabbed and strangled her, then ransacked our home. Looking at him in court, I felt sick. At 6ft 6ins, he was huge - Mum would've had

no chance against him. And he showed no remorse. As the judge sentenced him to a minimum of 22 years in prison, I fell on Granda's shoulder, sobbing. Justice had been done, but I was heartbroken over Mum. She was only 38 when she died and it just felt so unfair.

"Alauva had robbed me of my mum, but I was determined he wouldn't take anything else. That September I began studying advertising and management at the University of Northumbria - I'd always dreamt of working in fashion

magazines and I knew it would make Mum proud. Then, in May 2010, after I'd completed my first year, I decided to enter Miss Northern Ireland. I know some disapprove of the contest and see it as just a beauty pageant, but to me it meant much more. Mum's love of glamour had stayed with me. Shopping with Raymond's mum for the perfect outfit for the contest reminded me of the times Mum and I went shopping - it made me feel close to

her. I couldn't believe it when I made it through to the final 25.

"Inevitably, the local papers picked up on my past and ran stories about Mum's death. But I was determined my place in the competition wouldn't be down to a sympathy vote, so when I was asked about Mum in interviews I'd politely move the topic on. When my name was announced as the winner

in the glitzy ceremony last June, I squealed. But as I smiled for pictures, my Miss Northern Ireland 2010 sash tied across my sparkly dress, my eyes welled up. I could hear my family cheering but there was one special voice missing Mum's. She'd have loved to see me crowned as Miss Northern Ireland.

"As well as the title, I won £1,000 in shopping vouchers, £15,000-worth of

People

who knew her

especially our

smiles

clothes, a new car and a contract with Alison Campbell

Models. But it was a bittersweet celebration. Every girl wants to share good news with would always say her mum, and not a day passes when I how alike we were,

don't long to pick up the phone and tell her about my day. But I just try to remember the good times, as well as being

thankful for Raymond and all the loving friends and family I do still have.

"Four months after the contest, I was one of 116 finalists who jetted off to China for the finals of Miss World 2010. I met so many smart women there. I made it through to the final 25, but I didn't mind not winning. Walking down that runway in a white dress part of this huge pageant - I could feel Mum beside me, as excited as ever. Knowing how proud I'd have made her was the best prize of all." •

BY JACQUI MEDDINGS. PHOTOGRAPH DEAN BELCHER. HAIR AND MAKEUP VICTORIA BARNES





Move over, Bridezilla, there's a way scarier prewedding beast in town, says Cosmo's Jacqui Meddings

remember my first experience as a hen fondly. It was my cousin Claire's do and it all began in Geppetto's pizzeria. I was 13 and watched in amazement as my mum, aunts and her friends plied the bride-to-be with champagne and phallicshaped gifts. For three hours they laughed non-stop. I'd had my first taste of a hen do, and I loved it.

After dinner, the adults tottered off into town while I went to sleep, longing for the day I'd become a fully-fledged, champagne-drinking hen myself.

More than a decade on, that day finally arrived. A friend was getting hitched and I was on the hen list. At last, it would be my turn to laugh uncontrollably at jokes that I now fully understood.

But when an email entitled 'Itinerary' popped into my inbox, my heart sank. For starters, it wasn't just a hen night it was a hen weekend. Then there were the precise times allocated for everything. This wasn't how it was meant to be. In nanoseconds, a whirl of emails had been exchanged between me and my friends,

slating the bossy hen-do organiser. This wasn't girl power; this was bitchier than an episode of America's Next Top Model.

Chatting to friends, though, it seemed I'd got off lightly... One received an invite with an itinerary in the form of an Excel spreadsheet (which was revised a further SIX times). Another was invoiced before the event for everything from drinks to her morning paper at the hotel.

With brides-to-be striving for perfection right down to the personalised confetti, it seems friends are under more pressure than ever to pull off the Perfect Do. Bridezilla has spawned a new monster: henzilla.

A henzilla is not usually the bride, but a bridesmaid or close friend - a detailobsessed pre-wedding demon in her own right. And along with a rabid appetite for organisation comes her expectation that, yes, you do want to spend a month's salary on this final fling.

I know one girl who got truly stung by a henzilla. At the start of the night in a swanky club, her henzilla urged, "Order whatever you like," as if it was paid for. At the end of the night they got thumped with a £10,000 bill (yes, really) to split between 20 of them. Ouch.

On top of presents for the bride, food, drinks, travel,

hotels, awful activities and extra-awful outfits, it seems henzillas' spending expectations are out of control. Not that I'm a Scrooge (honest!), although sacrificing that Mulberry handbag in favour of doing yet another poledancing class in Edinburgh is bound to make you slightly bitter (true example).

It seems sad that the real girl-power spirit of my first hen-do experience has been lost. In the fight to organise the weekend of a lifetime for the bride, the henzilla has forgotten about making it actually fun for everyone else. Be it gobbling up your cash, time or dignity, they'll stop at nothing to out (hen) do themselves, which leaves the rest of us having to pack a thick skin along with those penis straws.

Still, I'm staying hopeful. Now the warning's out, if enough of us get stung by the henzillas and spread the word,

we'll be sure to stamp out the species, and one day hen dos will be

> 100% fun again. And for my hen party (one day)? I'd like to say I'll see you at Geppetto's

- but, along with my hen-do utopia, it got shut down.

Want to beat henzilla? Take some advice from the editor of Cosmo Bride, visit www.cosmopolitan.co.uk/ henharmony. •



Bulging handbags. Mobile phones. Emotional baggage.

That's quite enough to schlep around, without a heavy conditioner adding the extra burden of follicle flatness.

But hark! Who's this tripping lightly into view?

Enter Aussie 3 Minute Miracle deep conditioners.

Rich, bouncy, post-shampoo pick-me-ups that leave you

buzzing with what we call Luscious Light-ness.

Not just a look, it's a whole way of life. With just one not-unpleasant side-effect:

light-headedness.



Confessions Your juiciest secrets this month

Who's that boy?

When a case of mistaken identity leads to red faces all round

Sleep treat

"I'd been seeing a guy for a while when I stayed at his for the first time. I wanted to make a good impression on his housemates, so was thrilled when we were all chatting comfortably by the end of the evening. Later that night, I navigated my way to the bathroom before finding my way back to his room in the dark and climbing into bed. Cuddling up to my man, he hugged me back for a split second before suddenly leaping up with a shriek. Unfamiliar with his house, I'd managed to go into the wrong room - and cosy up to the wrong man! Luckily they both saw the funny side, but it was a bit more comfortable than I wanted to get!" Claire, 22, receptionist, London

Jump startle

"I was out shopping with a male friend one Saturday when we ended up getting separated. Spotting him from afar, I decided to jump up behind him. I ran up, grabbed his shoulders and screamed, 'Boo!' in his ear. He screeched and jumped



out of his skin. It was only when he turned round that I realised it wasn't my friend – just a man with similar clothes and hair. My friend witnessed the whole thing and creased up laughing. I'm not sure who was more embarrassed – me or the poor guy who I'd made scream like a girl!"

Katie, 25, web editor, London

In the dark

"My friends and I were out recently when one of them bumped into her

ex-boyfriend. He was really rude to her and she spent ages in the toilet crying over him. Fuelled by a few too many cocktails, I went up to her ex and threw a drink over him. Except, I found out that he wasn't my friend's ex, but a lookalike who I'd mistaken in the dark. I spent the whole evening apologising to the poor soaking-wet man and buying him drinks to make up for it."

Helen*, 27, receptionist, Plymouth >

Read more Cosmo readers' confessions at

WWW.COSMOPOLITAN.CO.UK/COMMUNITY/CHANNEL

You're not the boss of me!

"It was my first day at a new part-time job and I was keen to make a good impression. I met my boss, Jon, and he showed me around the open-plan office, introducing me to everyone. The whole day was a bit surreal - a mad rush of new faces and names - and I was soon busy doing stuff for everyone. The next day, when I was back in the office, I didn't know what I was supposed to be doing, so decided to find my boss to ask. I walked over to a desk and asked the man sitting there if he'd seen Jon. He replied, 'Umm... yes, I'm Jon. We met yesterday, remember?' It wasn't the flying start I'd hoped for!"

Trolley dolly

Samantha, 21, student, London

"I was helping my boyfriend with the supermarket shopping, grabbing stuff off the shelves while he pushed the trolley. Reaching for a couple of big boxes of condoms, I threw them in, grinning, 'We'll get through this lot quickly!' before moving to the next aisle. I was browsing the baked beans when a good-looking guy tapped me on the shoulder and handed me two boxes of condoms. 'I... I think you put these in my trolley by mistake', he stuttered. It turned out my boyfriend had been in a completely different aisle. Maybe it would have had a happier ending if I'd been single!"

Grace, 23, student, Sheffield

Warm up

"It was my boyfriend's 30th birthday, so I decided to give him a sexy surprise when he got back from work. Dressing up in silk knickers and nipple tassels, I covered the bed in rose petals and opened some champagne. I heard my boyfriend's key in the door and lay provocatively on the sofa. However, instead of my boyfriend walking into the room, his best friend did. I screamed and tried to cover my dignity while my boyfriend's mate looked horrified. It turned out my boyfriend had invited him over to watch the football and had given him a key to the flat. My man thought it was hilarious, but I'm still too embarrassed to see the funny side." Sarah*, 30, nurse, London



Crushing crushes

You can't always choose who you fancy...

We are family

"I always had a bit of a thing for my mate's mum. One day, I was invited to his house for a get-together. I didn't know some of the guys there so, trying to make conversation, I nudged one of them and said, 'I'd give his mum one.' There was a silence before he said, 'She's my aunt'. Not only was I excruciatingly embarrassed, but he told my friend what I'd said, and I was banned from his house. Oops!"

Patrick*, 24, retail assistant, Manchester

Bottom marks

"All my friends knew I fancied one of my lecturers at uni. One night, egged on by them, I went into detail about what I'd do to her in the bedroom. I didn't realise they were recording the whole thing. They played it back on loudspeaker during our next lecture! I don't know who was more red-faced, her or me. I swapped modules after that – I couldn't face her again."

John*, 25, trainee solicitor, Leeds

Night nurse

"Last year on an internship, I indulged in some innocent flirting with a colleague, despite having a girlfriend. A few weeks later I came down with the flu. I updated my status on Facebook, and the next thing I knew, I had a sexy visitor wearing a nurse's uniform. Unfortunately, the girl on my doorstep wasn't my girlfriend but my colleague. I was still trying to get rid of her when my girlfriend came home. The girl told the whole office I was a liar as she'd been convinced I was single. As for my girlfriend... I'm still apologising!" David*, 22, student, Nottingham

Mind your step

"I don't have much contact with my dad, and the only member of his new partner's family I'd ever met was my stepbrother. When I bumped into him in town, he was with a gorgeous girl, and we hit it off right away. I was thrilled when she tracked me down on Facebook, and we started dating. But a month later, my stepbrother called to drop a bombshell. The girl I'd been dating was his sister – making her my stepsister! She'd known all along but decided not to tell me. Unsurprisingly, the relationship soon fizzled out, but my friends still make fun of me about it."

Dave*, 28, fitness instructor, Luton •

Share your confessions at

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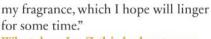
BEYONCÉ

talks to *Cosmo* about men, sex and butter pecan ice cream. Oh, and why she took a year out to spend more time with her man, rapper Jay-Z...

Interview LOUISE GANNON







What does Jay-Z think about your fragrance - does he have a favourite?

[Laughs] "Oh, are you kidding? One of the most important aspects of my perfume is that they get his seal of approval. When you wear a perfume, you want your man to love it. He loves my scents because he was part of the decision-making process. I wouldn't wear a scent if he didn't like it."

How should a man smell to be sexy?

"A man should never be too overbearing with his scent. I've been in too many elevators next to too many men with strong aftershave, and it's a total turnoff. With men, a scent should be subtle, clean and fresh, and just make you want to lean in to smell more. That's sexy." When you were younger, how did

you think your life would be at 30?

"This is really funny but when I was younger I thought I'd be retired by 30. Now I'm nearly there I can't believe how much more I want to do. I never imagined I'd have as much success as I've had. I thought it would be great just to get a record out. I never imagined the extent of what I've achieved, I never imagined the awards, the movies... I still can't believe it. I'm grateful for all of it and don't take it for granted. When I do something, I try and do it as well as I can." Hitting 30 is a milestone for women - it's the time when our lives maybe move into marriage and babies and growing up. How do you feel about it?

"My attitude is, there is always room for growth. I feel more comfortable about expressing myself, more in control and yes, I do want to embrace what happens next - and family. It's funny how your outlook changes as you get older, how you look at life, at other women, in a different way. I have so much admiration for women who are mothers, who balance family and work. I see them and I have this word in my head: respect. I also look to learn. I see these women and I think, 'Yes, it can be balanced, it can all work out. I do believe that it's possible to have



it all - work, a career, babies... It's all a question of being very organised. That's what I'm getting my head around." What has been a huge milestone for you this year?

"This is an easy one. I gave myself a break - I took a year off. Now that sounds very indulgent but I've worked since the age of 15, and never taken any time out. My life has always been about next, next, next, and moving on. I just decided I had to stop. It was the best decision I've ever made, and definitely a milestone. I took time out, spent time with my man, my friends, my family. I got to sleep in my bed night after night, which is a massive thing for me. I often don't get to sleep in the same bed twice for months because of moving from one place to the next. I travelled as a tourist. I took in culture. ballet, art exhibitions, went to restaurants, ate really good food... It was amazing." Did you get to be a traditional stay-at-

home wife to Jay-Z?

[Laughs] "Yes! I even did some cooking, although I didn't really enjoy that. I'm not the greatest cook - I can do good things with oxtail, though. It was great just having the time to be a wife rather than this non-stop travelling career girl." How easy was it just to switch off?

Were you tempted to get busy again? "I was, but on my own terms. I did all these things I wanted to do that I don't have time for. I set up a production company, learnt how to edit, did a bit of recording and directed a DVD. What was great was having this normal life of sleeping, getting up, going to an office and then coming home. Coming home is a wonderful thing."

The ad for your last perfume, Heat, was deemed too sexy for TV. Do you think society still gets hung up about a woman showing her sexuality?

"It was too hot [laughs]. I wasn't annoyed, I thought it was funny. Personally, I don't think my ad was any more crazy sexy than other ads out there - I loved it, despite whatever anyone else thought. It was based on a really hot George Michael video and yes, it was sexy, but then you >

"The most alluring thing a woman can have is confidence. You can be beautiful but if you're not secure in yourself, you don't come across as sexy. You have to feel good about yourself to make others feel good about you."

What advice would you give to women who don't feel body confident?

"Don't focus on all the bits you don't like. Look at yourself in a different way and work out what it is you do like. Try on lots of dresses and learn what silhouette suits you best. I love my sister's style but she's way thinner than me and what looks great on her doesn't look great on me, so I go my own way. I'd also say work on those bits you don't like. I'd love to have athletic legs but I don't. I do, however, work on my legs a lot when I exercise to try and get near that shape. No one is perfect but everyone has the opportunity to make the best of themselves."

What are your rules of seduction?

"Put on good music and something that makes you feel great. I love a pair of high, sexy stilettos with a beautiful dress, but you have to find what works for you - whether it's doing the whole smoky eyes thing or a natural look. And never be predictable. Mix it up, surprise him, change your hair - be the woman he knows with a little bit of a twist." You are a role model to millions of

women. What's the best advice one woman can give to another?

"I want to say just two things. Learn the power of the word 'no'. A lot of women spend their lives saying yes to everyone, trying to please them. That's what I used to do. Just learn to say no and take back control of your own life. The other is



Name: Seyence

Nickname: B

I feel sexiest when I'm:

- a) Dressed down in jeans and a T-shirt
- b) Wearing a red-carpet dress
- c) In cute lingerie at home
- d) Naked

e) Other...

Just out of the shower in my mans T-shirt

My favourite part of my body is:

- a) My butt
- b) My legs
- c) My stomach
- d) My boobs
- e) Other...

My Eyes

The most important thing in my makeup bag is... My I pool

My biggest beauty sin is... Sometimes I am too lazy to wash my make up off at night

My biggest beauty treat is ...

Swimming with ocean and ExFoliating with the sand

If I'm feeling down I boost my confidence by ...

Dressing up. Wearing my Favorite Ensemble

If I could trade lives with another woman for a day it would be...

V can call me KING B

The best advice I've been given in the past 12 months is...

Unever know how strong you are until Being strong is your only choice

This time next year I hope to be...

Continue Happy with unex peace

My biggest fashion and beauty lesson my mum taught me is...

Find out what works for your Body type \$ personality

You'd be shocked to find out that I've never...

Gione a week without weaking hoels

If I weren't a singer, I'd love to be...

A psychiatrist

The time in my life I felt at my happiest was...

April 4th 2008* At my nepheus Birth c) the day destings child got a reward deal d) The year I took my First real vacation

*The rumoured date of her wedding

something I learnt from Oprah Winfrey, which is visualising goals. Work out what you want from life, write those things down and look at them and believe you can attain them. I write down my goals and it definitely works for me."

How do you deal with your own body-confidence issues?

"I've learnt to accept what I have and work on those areas I can change. I don't obsess. I love my butter pecan ice cream, but I also love to work out. We all have our issues. Mine is arms and legs, keeping them tight and toned. It takes

work, believe me, but I do believe in putting in that work."

All of the above

Whose body do you admire?

"I think all women look at other women and go, 'Wow'. I love Halle Berry - she has great arms, and Kim Kardashian is gorgeous with all those curves. And Naomi Campbell has a fantastic body." So, Beyoncé, are there any male bodies

that you drool over?

[Laughs] "Only one. Just one guy, and I think you can guess who that is." > Beyoncé's new fragrance, Heat Rush, is available nationwide from 6 April.



JIMMY CHOO

PARFUMS

ЛИМУСНОО.СОМ

Unforgettable in HAT'S YOU

We've gathered the sexiest, naughtiest tips from those in the know: sexperts, sex writers, you – and your men. Read on (but don't expect to leave the bedroom anytime soon)

Oral superiority



Siski Green, author of How To Blow His Mind In Bed To make oral sex great, the

trick is to focus on his head

the one on his penis. To do

this, take him a little way into your mouth, then place your index finger in between his penis and your upper teeth (to prevent any accidental biting). Now, with your tongue, push up hard on the underside of his penis head and try to swallow. This creates a fantastic suction sensation. Oh, and suck an analgesic cough sweet beforehand – you'll be far less aware of the sensation at the back of your throat...?

To the left, to the right

Fi, 30, waitress, Aberdeen

Make the most of *all* of your clitoris, ladies. When he's deep inside you, slide your hips side to side, not just up and down. I did it by mistake once when I had a bad back – it stimulates parts you never knew existed.

Distraction tactic



Kurt, 27, off-shore worker, Dublin

Changing positions: great, but it can feel awkward. One woman I slept with had a

great technique – she grabbed my face in her hands and dealt me this massive snog, while switching positions. I didn't even twig what she was doing at the time, but I realised later that it made the scrambling about just seem more wild and sexy.

Blindfold devotion



Violet Blue, sex columnist and author of *Total Flirt*

One of your best bedroom allies is the blindfold – get yourself a nice one from a

women's boutique. Blindfold him and take off his clothes, then make him take *your* clothes off while he's blindfolded. His fingers will do all kinds of walking. Once your clothes are off (you can help him),



Cosmo talks sex

tell him you're going to kiss him all over, then do exactly that, taking your time. Talk to him while you do it. Next, tell him you're going to touch him with a part of your body that isn't your hands and that he has to guess what part of you it is. You can decide what his reward is for correct guesses!

Put YOU first



Ross, 31, tennis pro, Edinburgh Women should be selfish in bed. But they never are

do they think it's impolite? Men
 LOVE it if you demand what you
 want! Honestly, don't be shy. The hottest
 line I ever heard? "If you're good, I'll let you."

A touch of bondage

Paul, 31, carpenter, Ipswich

I'm not into bondage but my girlfriend was, and her compromise was great. She had a long, silky scarf that she wore round her neck so the ends fell over each nipple. She said it felt really sexy, and it was cream-coloured so I could *just* make out the nipple outline. Once we got into things, I ended up doing all sorts with it: wrapping it round her breasts, running it between her legs. She loved it and so did I!

Butterfly fingers



Susan Quilliam, sex expert and co-author of The New Joy Of Sex

The 'Venus butterfly' is a technique first mentioned in

an old episode of *LA Law*. A character smugly claimed it would bring any woman to continuous and extended orgasm. At first it was utterly fictional but then it developed into an urban myth – so sexologists over the years have suggested what it might entail. One method is to get him to place his palms together and put the two index fingers into your vagina, his thumbs on your clitoris and one finger in the anus, then open and close the palms. Physical impossibility or pathway to heaven? Explore and find out for yourself!

Naughty training

Nat, 27, yoga instructor, London

If getting your man to be a bit more naughty is one hell of an effort, here's an easy and effective way (that doesn't make him feel he's failing either): tell him that whatever he's doing, you want him to ask,

'More?' When he does, just reply, 'Yes' (assuming you *do* want more, that is). It's simple, but so sexy.

Scientifically proven!

Roisin, 29, student, Manchester

"Women should be selfish in bed. Men LOVE it if you demand what you want! Don't be shy"

According to research*
(this is honestly true

— I tried it!), low
ceilings make a
distracted man focus.
So if you want his
exclusive attention,
pin a dark-coloured
scarf over your bed (it'll
make the ceiling seem lower)
dim light on the floor. Or do it

and place a dim light on the floor. Or do it in a cupboard – the enclosed space makes everything super-exciting too!

Have a slowie



Em (left) & Lo (right), sex writers and creators of www.emandlo.com • Everyone loves a quickie, but what makes it hot is how

urgent it feels. If you always tear off each other's clothes, then a quickie becomes the

norm. So next time, make it a 'slowie'.

Take your time to remove your clothes, piece by piece. Hint: start with the shoes, because nothing spoils the moment more than getting trousers stuck around your ankles and collapsing with the grace of an amateur ice skater...

Express yourself



Debby Herbenick, research scientist and author of Because It Feels Good: A Woman's Guide To Sexual Pleasure And Satisfaction

Two super tips for sharing sexual fantasies: one, say them out loud *during* sex – you'll be too busy to feel self-conscious – and two, talk in the present tense: "I walk into the room, take my clothes off and..." Doing this keeps your attention in the moment, which recent research has shown enhances female arousal...

Scent of a man

Ian Kerner, author, sex counsellor and columnist (www.goodinbed.com)
Not in the mood for sex? Hug your partner for 30 seconds and take a big sniff at the base of his neck. A 30-second hug



FROM A 2007 STUDY BY THE UNIVERSITY OF MINNI



Cosmo talks sex

is known to increase oxytocin levels in women - the cuddle hormone that contributes to sexual attraction - and many women say that their man's scent is the most powerful turn-on. So combine the two to jump-start desire.

Low down and dirty



Jody, 25, illustrator, Birmingham

When talking dirty, drop your voice much lower in pitch. I read about this vocal

coach who suggested it for flirting, and I swear not only do you sound sexier but you feel more confident. It's as if you're playing a character, which makes it somehow less intimidating.

Memorable moves



Cory, 29, ski instructor, Australia

There are two things a woman has done to me that I'll never forget. One: a slow-

dance. Nude. It was inspired foreplay you're close but just not close enough. And two: sex on a beanbag. It helps access parts you can't reach on a simple armchair.

V is for victory



Olivia St Claire, author of The Sex Devotional: 365 Days Of Passion, Positions, And Pure Pleasure

Here's how to make the doggy position even more amazing: spread

your first and second fingers apart and place that V over your clitoris. Squeeze and knead your two fingers around your bud and his penis, creating extra sensation for both of you.

Great sensations

Dr Patricia Taylor, sex expert at expandedlovemaking.com Similar to a man's, a woman's genitals including the clitoris, labia and vagina - will feel at least 10 times more sensation and intensity when they're engorged (ie, swollen). Invite your man to gently squeeze your clitoris and labia to start things off - but often with more pressure than he might guess. Prepare to enjoy what follows way more! If you feel uncomfortable

asking, do this yourself before you get too



Change is good

Dr Sadie Allison, pleasure coach

Put a twist on an old favourite: he'll be even more aroused, and it will make you seem adventurous and experienced. A key way is to vary your hand-job technique. Lube up your hands, then interlock your fingers and cross your thumbs. Put his penis in the middle, then glide your hands up and down the shaft, rhythmically squeezing your hands together as you do."

Tease him senseless

Tracey Cox, sex expert and 'sex tip queen' at www.lovehoney.co.uk

€Oh-so-gently glide the tip "Get of your tongue across his a wig - it's lips, letting him feel the ultimate your hot breath on his accessory for mouth. Then start sucking and lapping role-playing. You around his mouth and feel like some whisper, "This is how hot, other I'm going to kiss your woman' penis next..." It'll drive him crazy!

Good vibrations

Gemma, 31, PA, Newport

≤If, like me, you're nervous about introducing a sex toy, the Lily by Lelo is brilliant. It's tiny and nearly flat. I either

slip it down the front of my sexiest knickers and sit astride him, or tuck it between my thighs while kissing him standing up. You tighten different muscles when you're upright, so it's also a great new twist on getting yourself off when you're alone: the stand-up orgasm! The trick is not dropping it...?

The Lily is £79 and available from www.myla.com

Be the other woman



Megan, 27, business student, Dublin Get a wig. It's the ultimate accessory for role-playing if

the idea of trying it freaks

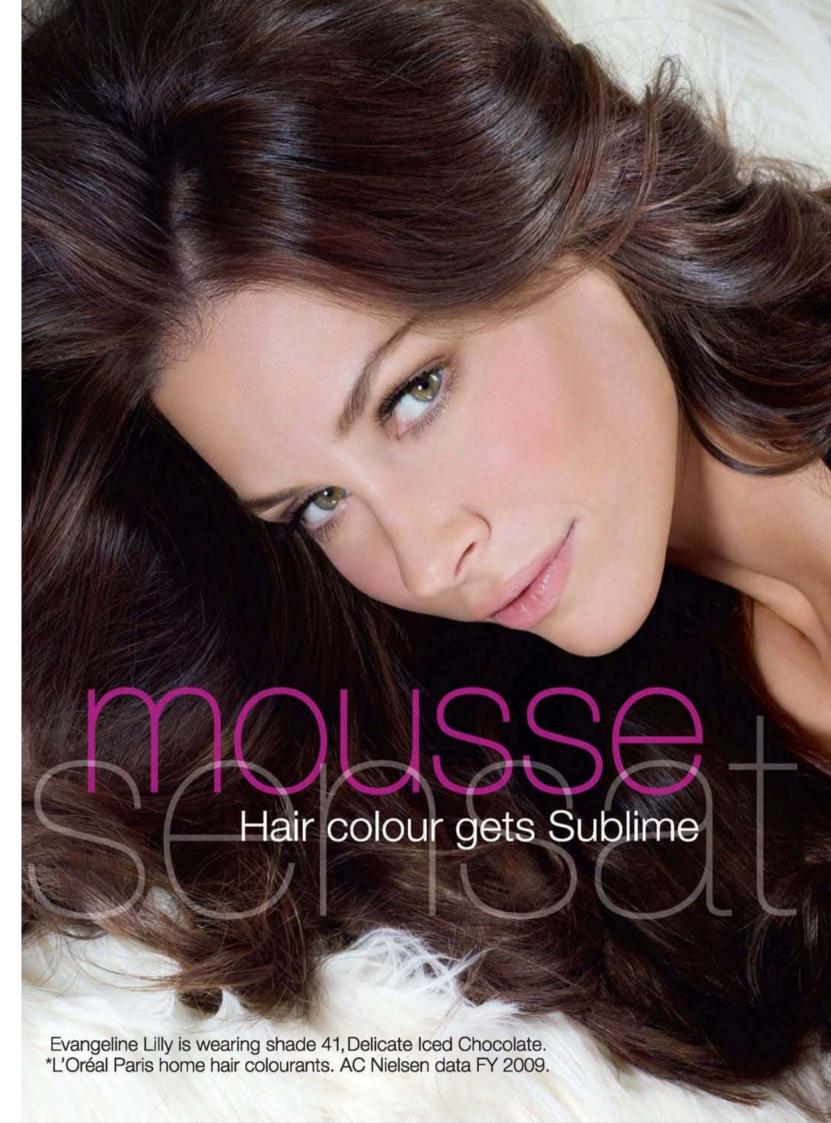
you out a bit. You feel like some hot, other woman, and it's classier and less clichéd than a nurse's uniform. He'll love it.?

Just say yes

Claire Cavanah and Rachel Venning, co-founders of NY sex-toy emporium Babeland and co-authors of Moregasm: Babeland's Guide To Mind-Blowing Sex Say yes to sex every time your partner asks - for a whole year. Even if you're not in the mood. Starting sex is one of the best ways to feel sexy. Stop waiting for the right moment and just go with any moment. You'll be surprised by the results! 5 ◆

far along into the festivities.







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L'ORÉAL PARIS





Cosmo insider

experience to a whole new level. Except this is no nightclub - this is a house party, new-Hollywood style.

"Even a couple of years ago you could go to the 'in' nightclub and be standing two feet away from a big star," Wynter Mitchell, an LA-based celebrity reporter for Us Weekly magazine, tells Cosmo. "But that's all changed now. The top names rarely go to bars or clubs; they have wild nights at each other's homes instead."

And it's not an unexpected Dom Perignon drought that's driven the A-list party circuit underground; it's the meteoric rise of the 'citizen stalkerazzi' - regular folk who, through the use of camera phones, Twitter and celebritysighting websites, have made it virtually impossible for celebs to let down their immaculately-coiffed hair in public.

"Twitter has become my main tipster," says Dave. As a veteran Hollywood paparazzo, he hails the advent of social networking media as "the biggest blessing we've had in years".

"I used to drive around for hours in the hope of spotting a familiar number plate on a car, but now I can find out exactly where someone like Blake Lively is at any given moment. I used to have to pay for tip-offs but now I just type her name into a search engine and often someone will have tweeted her exact location."

Cash for photos

And with the proliferation of gossip mags and websites hungry for exclusive content, club-goers can often sell their grainy iPhone images to the highest bidder. Some websites actively encourage users to cash in on their celebrity encounters, with one, Meetthefamous.com, claiming that last year's shots of David Beckham buying a Halloween pumpkin netted one snap-happy bystander more than £1,000. Other sites Wicked such as Justspotted.com whispers and the Stalker facility on Which 'personality' has a purpose-built nightclub in her Gawker.com are set up home, complete with a set of for users to post updates custom-made, jewel-encrusted on stars' locations.

silver 'straws' for cocaine "I used to make good snorting that only her inner money getting pictures sanctum are permitted of stars stumbling out of clubs drunk," recalls Dave. "That very rarely happens now. They're all going to places where we can't find them."

But paps like Dave are now the least of the celebrities' concerns, according to



Wynter. "It's the people inside the clubs that they worry about," she says. "Justin Timberlake had a huge party after a charity concert he performed in Las Vegas last year. It was at The Bank nightclub, which is very

exclusive, but despite the

very strict door policy, he was so concerned about not being watched that he insisted noone could stand on the club's balcony overlooking where he was sitting. It meant that

they couldn't accommodate many guests, but he obviously didn't want to take any chances."

Wynter sympathises with the celebs' plight. "The majority of people in bars and clubs treat celebrities like they're

to use?

animals in the zoo," she says. "They'll just stand there, gawking and trying to get pictures. Some of the big LA clubs, like Voyeur, try to enforce a no-picture policy,

but people always get around

it. It's way safer for the celebrity to throw a party in their home - then they can be in control of the guest list."

And it's not just in la-la land that celebrities have been forced to restrategise their social lives.

According to Sarah Tetteh, a showbiz reporter on the Daily 's 3am column, the nightclub exodus has reached the UK, too.

"I have noticed a definite shift away from the clubs in London's West End," Sarah says. "The advent of Twitter has changed the way stars party; they're much more wary than they used to be. They're planning house parties a lot more than before, and when they do go out it isn't to the obvious places.

"Over Christmas, Peaches Geldof and Alexa Chung wanted to cheer up Kelly Osbourne, who was down after her split with Luke Worrall. A few years ago I'd have expected to see them drinking in Mahiki or Cuckoo, but they all went to a Turkish dive bar in the east end of London. It was a pretty run-down place, and no one recognised them, so they spent the night playing pool - I heard that they had their best night out in years."

It's not only the social lives of celebrities that are being affected by fans' social networking - their relationships are also being put under strain. "Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart were having a meal at the Palihouse hotel in west Hollywood; it's quite a low-key venue so they thought they were safe," says Wynter. "But another guest tweeted a photo that they'd taken of them on their camera phone, and before the couple had finished eating, hundreds of fans had turned up at the hotel. It was total chaos: Rob couldn't leave; he had to get a decoy to exit. That pandemonium was caused by a single tweet."

Super-agent Jonathan Shalit, whose clients include Myleene Klass, Kelly Brook and Jamelia, believes his clients have the right to live their lives without feeling 'under siege'. "I think that realtime social networking is both a >







So, if mingling with their iPhonewielding public isn't an option for these people, what is?

House-party heaven

Jes Gordon, events organiser and co-author of Party Like A Rock Star, counts Madonna and Jennifer Lopez as clients. She agrees that partying on home turf is preferable for her clients. "Celebrities never enjoy themselves at public events," she says. "They're always worried about being watched, especially now that everyone has a camera phone and wants to see their footage on TMZ."

When Jes organises house parties, her job is to ensure no detail is overlooked. "Sometimes a celebrity will be worried about people judging them on their style of home decor, so they'll get us to come in and restage the whole house before we even begin setting up the party," she says. "There are some definite trends in Hollywood: we're often asked to provide top nail technicians and spa therapists - even though actresses get

pampered all the time, they

never turn down a manicure.

"Instead of huge floral displays we do incredible things with LED lighting - which is 'green' - and, in terms of catering, mini bites of less healthy foods that celebrities would never normally eat, such as macaroni cheese, are very popular. They also love 'candy bars', which are like elaborate buffets of sweets and chocolates, and they eat more than you'd think!"

Jes was recently asked to build an entire fairground, complete with ferris wheel, in the garden of one celeb client, and booked the Jonas Brothers to

Wicked whispers Which young actress recently shocked guests at a Hollywood bash by performing an X-rated lap dance on a known drug dealer? The washed-up starlet was trying to get her stash for free... From top: Kate Moss; Kelly Brook gets friendly; LeAnn Rimes parties hard into the night **'Celebs** never enjoy themselves at public events' perform at a cost of

'around £70,000 for every 10 minutes". We're guessing they weren't booked for an encore.

But it's not just Hollywood types who know how to host a million-dollar bash. Peregrine Armstrong-Jones is a UK event organiser responsible for glamour-fests such as the Beckhams' wedding (who could forget those thrones!) and Elton John's annual 'white tie and tiara' balls. He says his clients are now looking to host their soirées in secluded houses, hunting lodges and undiscovered castles, and not just because they look stunning.

"These places are private by their very nature - they were built as refuges for those that lived in them," he says. "Now

they provide a refuge for celebrities who want to party out of the public eye."

Peregrine admits that, for some of his clients, "extravagance knows no bounds". He recently flew the Cirque du Soleil

troupe to Courcheval in France to perform at the birthday party of a Ukranian billionaire.

> (Also there to entertain the guests: Christina Aguilera.) And Peregrine's booked Elton John and Robbie Williams to perform at events. ("I wouldn't want to be indiscreet to the artists,

but you can be looking at millions," he says.)

And the latest trend for the great and the good of the showbiz world is to literally put their money where their mouths are by hiring celebrity chefs to cater for their guests. "That is a definite trend: to have the likes of Alain Ducasse or Gordon Ramsay making the canapés or a sit-down meal," confirms Peregrine. "It's a real talking point for guests, and will ensure your event is remembered." Well, it beats a box of Iceland mini kievs.

But it's not all bad news for nightclub proprietors. While you're less likely than ever to have Angelina asking to borrow your lippy in the loos of Whisky Mist, you may well have an Only Way Is Essex 'star' complimenting you on your tan.

And it's much the same across the pond. "The D-listers, such as the Jersey Shore cast, go out every night, and they're treated like megastars," says Wynter. "However, this is another factor putting off the real talent from going to clubs: the A-list don't want to mix and mingle with 'low rent' types."

Jes agrees: "People like the Kardashians have to go out and get papped and tweeted about, because if they're not pictured they have nothing else to fall back on; there's no sustainable career. They thrive on the attention and, with so many reality shows on, the clubs do good business from them."

So it looks like our only options are to ogle a reality-show reject from afar, or wait for an invite to a celebration at Chace Crawford's gaff... If you're reading, Chace, the only pictures we'll take will be for our private collections - promise. We'll just DM a few selected followers on Twitter... •

Want to throw your own A-list bash? Go to www.cosmopolitan.co.uk/party





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CRÉATIVE TECHNOLOGIE





lhe thirdrate rule

Rosie Mullender was never impressed by the 'thirddate rule' - and now it just makes her mad...

ho knows where it started, but many of us are familiar with the third-date rule. You know - the one about 'nice' girls waiting until the third

date before sleeping with a man. Whoever invented it, you can be sure it wasn't a woman. It puts pressure on us from all sides. According to this rule, as well as it being frowned upon to leap into bed with a man right away, if we want to wait a bit longer - say, five dates, or eight - we're considered unadventurous. Or, even worse, unliberated.

A quick survey among my male friends revealed they acknowledged that modern women often want sex as quickly as they do. But although they may be happy to rip our knickers off with their teeth on a first date, some admitted that they might not want to take things further afterwards.

One admitted, "If a man wants to have sex on a first date, you should be aware he probably doesn't plan to see you again." Which is refreshingly honest, though utterly depressing.

As someone who's used to long-term relationships, I'm reluctant to allow my bedpost to get whittled to the width of a toothpick. Especially when it wouldn't be at my behest, but purely because some man doesn't want to give me time to decide if I want to take it further. Yet many of the men I asked said they'd be disappointed if a girl hadn't slept with him by the third date. One even revealed he wouldn't bother

venturing past four dates, no matter how lovely a woman was, as he'd think she wasn't 'passionate' enough - ruling out me and my 'boring' collection of suspenders and sky-high heels immediately.

Of course, it depends on what you want. If you're feeling fruity and don't care if he calls, there's no point in waiting more than one date to find out what colour his Calvins are. But if you're looking for a lasting relationship, in this day and age, should we all be pressured to go the distance? Research has found that the best way to find out if your date is what scientists term a 'good male' is to hold off. If

he gets bored before getting to the sexy stuff, he's likely to be a 'bad male' Tm- or in layman's terms, 'That bastard who didn't call?

reluctant to None of this explains allow my why the man you dated for a month went off bedpost to get you as soon as you slept whittled to the with him. Or how so many one-night stands width of a lead to true love. When it toothpick comes to sex and dating, there are no hard-and-fast rules

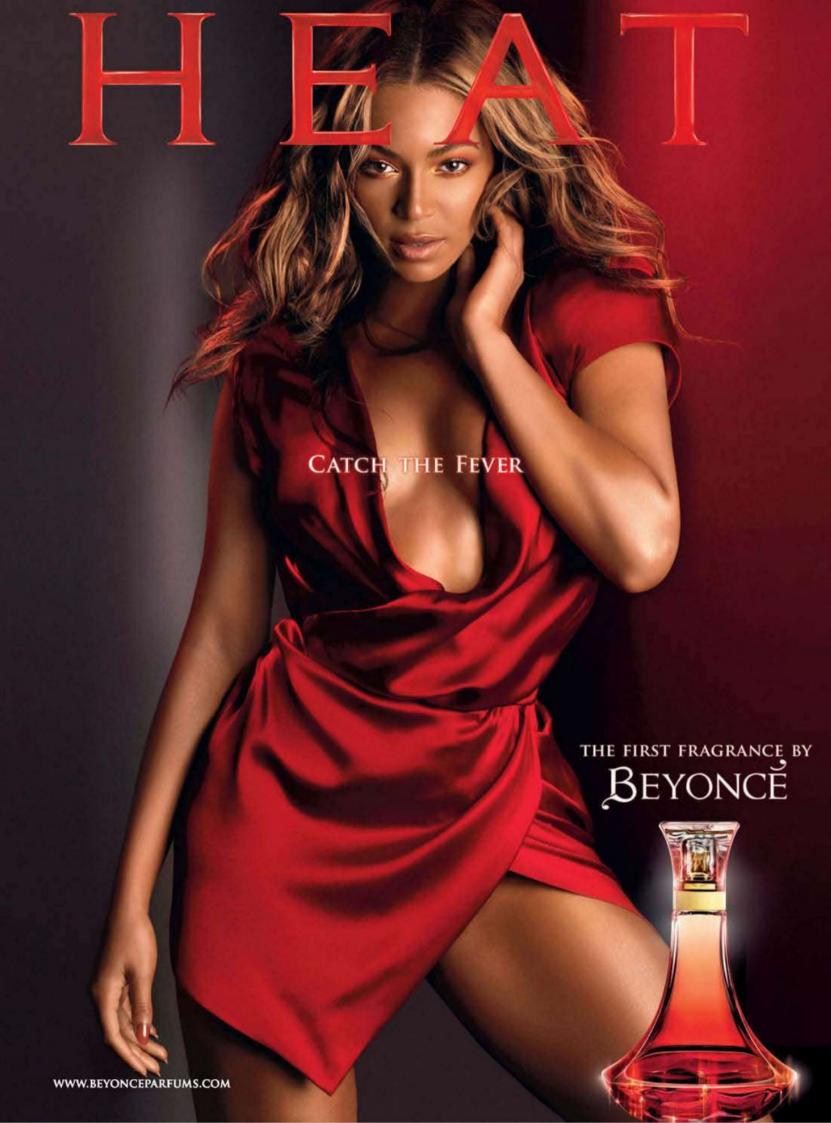
- or ways to second-guess how he - or you - will feel. Maybe the only rule we should stick to is to forget the rules. Or maybe us girls could come up with a few rules of

co.uk with 'Third-date rule' as the subject

What do you think? Email cosmo.mail@natmags.

our own. No sex for a month if he pees on the loo seat, anyone?

Follow Rosie at twitter.com/Mullies





A right royal wedding

The countdown's on to the wedding of the decade, and it's not Fiona Cowood's

unting. I know, I know, it's a bit twee and a bit cutesy, but I cannot convey my love of the stuff enough. My fiancé James says 'bunting' is my most repeated word ever, which is surprising, because over the past 12 months I've talked incessantly about loads of things: X Factor, being hungry, why we should get a micro pig... But back to bunting. Those festive triangles were Sadly, our first pinned up around the turn of the 17th century wedding won't presumably for the have a bank nuptials of a woodcutter and his busty wench. Fastholiday, Elton John forward 400 years and, at the start of 2011, I predicted that and a 12-gun bunting would become this salute' year's national obsession. With two royal weddings looming, plus a little affair in Croydon I may have mentioned (my wedding), the bunting magnates will be sipping cocktails in Sandy Lane with Simon Cowell come Christmas. And why not? Nothing says, 'Oi, everyone, let's celebrate' in the way bunting does. For me, a wedding without bunting would be like a wedding without James. Don't tell him that, though. I wonder if Kate Middleton harbours a

affection instantly. Besides, we've got loads in common: they got engaged in Africa in October; we got engaged in Africa in October. She's from Berkshire; James is from Berkshire. Her mum used to be an air stewardess; James's mum used to be an air stewardess. She lives in a castle, I live in a... Okay, that's about it. But still, I think you'll agree there are some spooky parallels. When I explained them all to James, his only comment was, "Yeah, but what

comment was, "Yeah, but what about mugs? They'll get mugs with their faces on. We won't."

I pointed out that we also won't have a bank holiday, Elton John and a 12-gun salute but, I guess in his eyes, it's the small things that make a wedding – even a royal one. If anything, though, organising a wedding in tandem with Wills and Kate only makes me grateful that, when y arrives, it won't be scrutinised by

the day arrives, it won't be scrutinised by 300 million people. In our case, only 100 people get to pass judgement on the dress, the food and the 'overall experience' (And, thanks to *Four Weddings*, that's inevitable.) Poor Kate will face much worse than that, but I'd say our parallel engagements make me the perfect candidate for a slot in the BBC commentary box. Once Huw Edwards has finished pointing out all the hats and the heads of state, he'll need somebody to fill some air time. And

I can talk about all the bunting.

3

PHOTOGRAPH DEAN BELCHER, HAIR AND MAKEUP VICTORIA BARNES

Follow Fiona at twitter.com/fionacowood

similar love. I do hope so. I quite like Kate, so

the idea of her moaning that the nation

could be decked out in "reams of ghastly,

frightful bunting" would snuff out that

APRIL 2011 COSMOPOLITAN * 71

Meet the twentysomething girls who match their handguns to their handbags

RAS

s Ashley, 26, (right),
a hairstylist from
Connecticut, gets
ready for a girls'
night out, she looks in the mirror
and adds a slick of lipgloss before
throwing it in her clutch bag along
with her other night-out essentials:
purse, mobile and her metallic-pink
gun. Yes – a real, has-proper-bullets,
could-kill-someone firearm...





Cosmo report

Shocked? Perhaps more shocking is the fact that Ashley is in no way unusual in the US. Scarily, a recent survey revealed that more than one in 10 American women regularly carry a gun. According to the National Rifle Association, the number of women buying guns has exploded in the past year. Diane Danielson of the NRA's 'Women On Target' shooting programme reveals that female membership is up 20%, with 10,000 new women a year learning to shoot. This is in a country where 89% of people own a gun.

PRETTY PISTOLS

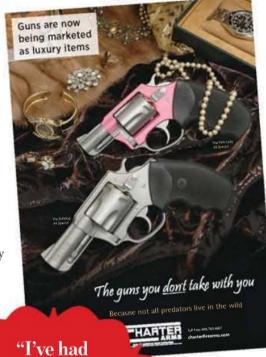
In fact, female demand has grown so much that firearm manufacturers

are adapting their products to cater for women customers. "They're scaling down the handles and shortening the trigger-pull lengths for women's shorter fingers," says Diane.

They're also making them pretty. Gunmakers are now marketing their products directly at women, with stylised weapons to match their wardrobes. Nick Ecker of Connecticut-based manufacturer Charter Arms says, "When we had the idea of producing a range of coloured handguns for women, sales went through the roof. Our customers like to accessorise their outfit with their weapon. I've had women buy a gun to match the latest Chanel nail polish. Now we make 10,000 a year – everything from pink or lavender to bright blue, green or red."

And Ashley is one of their new eager customers. "When I first saw that brightly coloured gun, I thought, 'This is made for me – it even matches the streaks in my hair!' she explains. "I love having everything colour-coordinated, and this gun is the ultimate fashion accessory.

"Growing up in my family, everyone was comfortable with guns. My cradle was in my father's gun room, so I literally grew up around them. I always felt safe when Dad was relaxing at home with a gun on his knees. As soon as I was big enough, I started handling guns and I took my first shot aged 12. However,



women buy a gun to match their latest Chanel nail polish. We sell them in everything from pink or lavender to bright blue, green or red."

look cool,
but I don't
wave it about
or show it off.
Carrying a
gun actually
makes you more
aware of danger.
You could harm

my gun might

someone or yourself if you don't use it right.

That's why I go to the range every week. It steadies you and keeps you sharp.

"If companies are making cute guns for girls, why shouldn't we have one? We need to protect ourselves and I'd encourage every woman to consider buying one. When I carry my gun, I feel confident, and not just because it's a deadly weapon. It's because I'm using my rights, which feels good. Plus shooting is like any other hobby – you improve, you take pride in it and you enjoy it.

"I've never had to draw my weapon on anyone... yet. It scared me when I first shot a gun but you get used to it. I'm quite small and when it kicks back you think, 'If this bullet went through someone, it'd kill them.' It's strange having that kind of power in your purse, but it feels good."

A GROWING TREND

"Our biggest-selling weapons are the Pink Lady and the Lavender Lady," Nick says proudly. "They're handbag-sized and retail at around

£240 – about the price of a designer

dress. It's no surprise they sell well with women. Some have bought the gun in every colour we have. We can barely keep up with demand."

And the way guns are now being advertised reflects this change. A recent magazine ad for the Charter Arms brand features a luxurious piece of designer luggage, laden with jewellery, complete with his-and-hers guns. It's clear these deadly killing machines are being marketed as glamorous lifestyle items.



"I think it's good that women are becoming more comfortable around guns, and learning how to use them," says **Brittany Ziegler**, a 24-year-old

student nurse from Atlanta, Georgia. "After all, my gun is totally a safety precaution. They say 96% of people freeze in panic situations, but this puts me at an advantage. Like the time I was burgled. I was able to bravely go into the house because I had a gun. Luckily they'd already left, but I'd have no problem opening fire on an intruder.

"I got my first gun three years ago and now I own three, including a .22 Beretta, a small, purse-sized pistol and a .25-calibre compact handgun. And I know how to shoot."

Every day, when she travels to college or work, Brittany wears a 'middle-of-the-back' holster to hide her gun, or tucks it in her belt loop and covers it with a T-shirt. "It makes me feel safe – it's easy to access and I can get my hand on it quickly," she says.



Amanda Yanez, 27, a sales associate also from Georgia, agrees. She owns a .45-calibre handgun complete with an infrared sight so she can use it at

night. "I like the new smaller weapons," she says. "I recently sold my shotgun and got something that I can fit in my handbag. I'm a girl and I need a more feminine weapon..."

Like the other women here, Amanda feels more secure when she's carrying a gun. "Women have been attacked in my area," she says. "There was a serial rapist recently, and a girl who lives nearby was shot and killed by her boyfriend not too long ago. I think she was cheating on him or something." Despite the troubling nature of a gun-related murder happening so close by, Amanda says

Amanda regularly attends the Ladies' Night at her local gun range. She's a good shot, but believes it's the threat of being fired at that keeps the 'crazies' away. "That cocking sound - 'click click' - frightens them more than waving it in their face."

But not everyone welcomes the trend of repackaging a weapon designed to kill, as something pretty and desirable. Rebecca Knox of the Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence says, "The gun industry's push towards women proves they are just out to make a buck. The average gunowning household in America has seven weapons, and it's increasingly difficult to get customers to buy that eighth, ninth or tenth gun. So they're turning to women. But guns are lethal weapons, not fashion accessories. I'm concerned this will make people take guns less seriously."



LETHAL WEAPONS

Coordinating aside, does carrying a handgun really make you safer? Brittany thinks so. "It makes you feel less of a victim," she says.

"America is the land of the free, and I bet crime figures would go down if citizens could carry arms in Britain." According to a recent survey of convicted US criminals, 34% had been 'scared off, shot at, wounded or captured by an armed victim, while 40% had decided not to commit a crime because they 'knew or believed that the victim was carrying a gun?

But while some criminals may be deterred by the prospect of being shot at, the widespread availability of guns in the US is responsible for a huge number of deaths and injuries every year. One study of shooting victims found that people who carried guns were 4.5 times more likely to be shot and 4.2 times more likely to be killed than unarmed people. And according to another study, US States with higher levels of household gun ownership have higher rates of firearm homicide. In 2009, there were 13,636 murders in the US - 67% of which were caused by firearms. In Britain, where gun ownership is strictly controlled, there were 600 murders - of which just 7% were gun-related.

Different States have different laws. Julie Benson from the Gun Owners of California says, "If you want to buy a gun here you have to sign a lot of paperwork and take a gun-safety test. Then there's a



PROTECTION OR PROBLEM?

We compare UK and S gun-crime stats



* Since 1997, handguns have been almost completely banned from private ownership, with pistols (with a barrel shorter than 30cm or a total length of less than 60cm) on the prohibited-weapons list.

* A police-issued certificate is needed before you can buy any firearm. Under Home Office guidelines, these are only issued if a person has legitimate sporting or work-related reasons for ownership. Applicants must be able to prove they can store each weapon safely, and pose no threat to the public, and they must provide two referees

* The UK is 46th in the world's murderper-capita list and has one of the world's lowest gun-crime rates.



- * Fully automatic firearms are legal in most States. Gun ownership laws vary from State to State - in some you need a permit, safety certificate or criminalrestrictive procedures are in place.
 - US citizens bought more than 14 million guns in 2009
 - * Firearms are responsible for, on average, 32,300 deaths per year.
 - * The US is 24th on the world's murder-per-capita list.

10-day waiting period while they conduct background checks." But in Texas you don't need a permit to purchase rifles, shotguns or hand weapons, and you don't have to register your gun. In Vermont there is no mandatory waiting period, and gun owners don't need a permit to carry a concealed weapon.

Recent high-profile killings, such as the massacre in Tucson, Arizona, where lone gunman Jared Lee Loughner is accused of killing six people and injuring 13 including US Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords - have seen critics calling for tighter restrictions. Brady Campaign president Paul Helmke said, "The entire situation is an example of how loosely we regulate lethal weapons in this country, and why we need to strengthen our laws to do what's sensible to protect the public. Polls are now indicating that more Americans back stricter gun laws."

Brittany thinks people just need to have respect for their weapons. "I'm very professional with my gun," she says. "People's lives could be at stake and I know it's not a toy to be played with. A gun is strictly for defence."

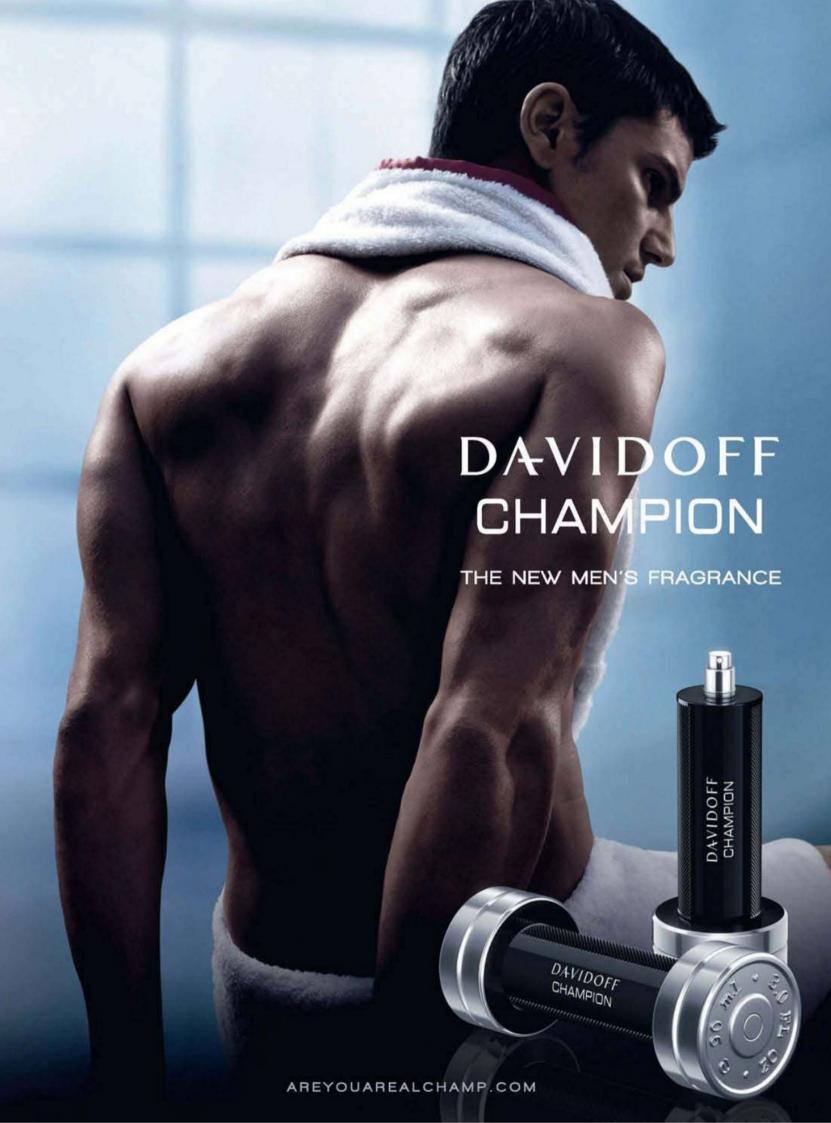
FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHTS

For women like Ashley, Brittany and Amanda, having a weapon is a right, not a privilege. American gun-owners cite the Second Amendment

to the United States Constitution, which states, 'The right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.' It's something they feel passionate about. "I can't imagine not being able to have the choice," Amanda says. "I wouldn't want to live in the UK if it meant I couldn't carry a weapon."

Self-defence aside, for many, owning a gun simply feels 'normal'. "My family has a farm with 300 acres, so we have tons of space to practise shooting," says Amanda. "I've been firing guns since I was a little girl. It's an adrenaline rush." Brittany feels the same way. "I'd wanted a gun since I was five. I bought one the moment I was legally old enough."

There's no doubt these women love using their weapons. "Mine is a hammerless, double-action gun, so it doesn't go off too easily," Brittany says, unable to hide her excitement. "You need to squeeze the trigger, and keep squeezing, for it to fire - then... boom! It's an amazing feeling." •





STAND TALL. WALK Clarks





e all know that boyfriends come with secrets – an eye-watering credit-card debt, a clingy ex who still texts him, or a past history with your best friend. When you start a new relationship you don't expect to know everything. But what if he had a secret that was so painful he couldn't talk to anyone about it? Something he'd buried away for years, but was slowly eating away at him – and your relationship.

It's a painful reality for thousands of young women every year whose boyfriends or husbands have been the victims of sexual abuse. And sadly it's more common than you might think. It's estimated that around 3.5% of UK men are sexually assaulted in their lifetime. That's more than a million of the current UK male population. And police believe that only one in 10 assaults is actually reported, so the figure could be much higher.

Katherine Blankley, 29, knows this only too well. She adored her boyfriend Chris, 28, but sometimes he'd go quiet, or there'd

Katherine

stood by

Chris

be a look in his eyes, as if he had some kind of secret. "In the

beginning it was so good," she remembers. "I met Chris at a party when I was 15, and from that first moment I felt able to tell him anything. The next day we went for a walk on the beach and I found myself

talking about how ill my nan was, and the difficult relationship I'd just been in. He was thoughtful and such a good listener. I knew I'd met someone really special."

As the couple grew closer – and eventually married – Katherine continued to rely on Chris. But at times he'd act strangely. "His moods were unpredictable. Sometimes he'd be snappy, or he'd just withdraw," she recalls. When they'd been together for 10 years, the problem seemed to be getting worse. "He kept reassuring me he was OK, but still I knew something was wrong – I just didn't know what."

A painful secret

What Katherine didn't realise was that Chris was struggling with problems that began years before, when he was just six years old. "I was abused for nine years by one



"I was scared and started pushing Rachel away"

Rachel*, 33, struggled when her boyfriend, John*, 35, started taking his abuse out on her

Rachel says: "When I met John we had such a strong connection, it felt like we were meant to be together. But after a while he started to find ways to push me away. Sometimes he'd disappear for days, or break things for no reason. He'd drink heavily, get aggressive – sometimes he even saw other girls. We were off and on for a long time, but I always went back to him because we loved each other.

"The day John told me about the abuse, we were supposed to be going out with family. But John was tense and monosyllabic and didn't want to go, so I went on my own. When I got back, I could see he'd been drinking. 'There's something I have to tell you, Rachel,' he said. 'I was abused when I was little. And when I was 18, I was raped. I've never told anyone, and I don't know what to do.' I burst into tears, then hugged him tight. It didn't change how I felt about him at all. After that, he started going for counselling. Now things are much better – he talks to me more, he's less

drinking. Finally we're working towards happiness."

John says: "I'd only recently moved to London when I was attacked. I'd got a job at a bar and lived in a flat upstairs with two other guys. But one night they held me down and raped me. I'd already been abused as a child by a family friend, and I felt so hurt and ashamed. I started to feel like it was something I'd done - like I deserved it. But I buried these feelings by drinking

"In relationships, I was always the one who walked away. It seemed like I didn't care, but deep down I think I felt like I wasn't good enough to be loved. When I met Rachel, I knew I'd finally found someone special. But I was scared and started driving her away.

"Then one day, I read about a memoir someone had written about abuse and everything came flooding back. The night I told Rachel changed my life. I decided not to go to the police, as I didn't want my family to know, but I've managed to move on. I'm just glad Rachel's come with me."

of my dad's friends, called Terence Michael Wheeler," says Chris. "He used to take me fishing – I worshipped him and trusted him. But then the abuse started. He made me believe there was nothing wrong with it, saying it was 'our little secret."

But when Chris reached his teens, he started to question what Terry was doing. "I realised he'd just been using me. I refused to see or speak to him, and he backed off. I hated him and what he'd done but, although I wanted to tell people, I found it too difficult and I didn't want to hurt my parents. So I just avoided him and tried to get on with my life."

Keeping quiet

And Chris's reaction – to block out the abuse – is common. Mary Eleftheriou, a counsellor who works with victims and

their partners, explains, "Men are taught by society to hold their feelings in and to be 'strong'. So if you've been sexually assaulted and made to feel 'less of a man,' it's even harder to open up about."

Many male survivors spend their teens and 20s in denial, drinking and partying; maybe sleeping around to 'prove their masculinity' or avoiding relationships altogether. Others go to the opposite extreme, like Chris did. "When I met Katherine I thought, 'Here's my chance to be normal'," he says. "Instead of being a victim, I got to be the strong, supportive boyfriend. I ploughed all my efforts into listening to her problems."

Feeling frustrated

But while Katherine could lean on Chris for support, she found he preferred to

keep his own problems to himself. "I had no idea about anything Chris had been through," she says. "He was the strong, silent type, and he didn't like to talk about his emotions. Initially that was fine, but when things started to change and his mood swings started, I wanted him to open up more. But when I asked him what was wrong, he'd just shrug it off."

Chris says, "I felt like I couldn't tell Katherine about the abuse. What if she saw me differently? What if I wasn't the guy she'd fallen in love with? It was too scary to think about, so I just kept quiet."

But, as Mary explains, eventually all the hurt, shame and anguish that abuse victims hold inside will begin to leak out. "They have to cope with feelings of anger, guilt and confusion, and may have issues with control, trust and sex. And, to put >

Chris was no exception: "I'd put all my feelings about Terry in a box and tried to forget them, but I couldn't. I'd get angry and frustrated."

He also started drinking.

"Before, he'd just have a few beers when we were out," recalls Katherine. "But then he started drinking at home, knocking back glass after glass of brandy. I was so worried."

"Nothing

Opening up

Despite the negative impact that silence has on their well-being and that of their partners, men like Chris find it very hard to get help. According to the NSPCC, 31% of victims keep their abuse secret until early adulthood, and counsellors at Survivors UK, a charity for male abuse and rape victims, say most men they help are in their 30s or older. Part of the problem is a lack of information or resources available to male victims, as Georgina Hoare from Survivors UK explains: "Even when men do seek help from a counsellor, many tell us that they were asked to try elsewhere because that counsellor didn't feel adequately trained to deal with the subject - which can put men off seeking proper help. More needs to be done to support these men - not just for their sake, but for society's."

For Katherine and Chris, the turning point came in March 2008, when Chris saw his abuser at a family party holding hands with a toddler. I suddenly had a terrible fear that he could do it to someone else, and I knew I had to tell."

One night, as they were going to bed, Chris finally blurted out what had happened. Katherine's reaction was extreme. "Nothing prepares you for your partner saying that," she recalls. "I ran to the toilet and was sick. But then I took a deep breath, went back into the bedroom and asked Chris what he wanted to do."

Moving on

Chris took the brave decision to report Terry to the police, and to start seeing a counsellor. It was a positive move but their relationship continued to feel the strain. "When Chris came home from counselling, he'd be withdrawn and moody," Katherine says. "I felt excluded from what he was going through. I knew he was suffering but I felt alone too." In

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the end, joint counselling helped them move forward. "He realised he had to let me in," says Katherine.

"I had to swallow my male pride," Chris says. "I cried endlessly, and that was hard. I'd always been the supportive one before."

In October 2009, Wheeler, now 66, was found guilty of nine counts of rape and sexual abuse, and sentenced to 13 years in prison. Having kept his secret for so long, Chris now copes by talking about it – advising police and Sexual Assault Referral Centres on how to deal with male victims. Meanwhile, Katherine and Chris are closer than ever. "Our relationship is a thousand times better," she says. "Secrets like that should never stay buried."

"I told her about the abuse in an argument"

Michael*, 32, was abused by his father over a period of four years

"My father started abusing me when I was eight and it didn't stop until my parents split up four years later. I tried to tell my mum once, but she didn't want to know - I don't think she could handle it. So instead of getting help, I clammed up.

"When I met Vicki" at uni, I hoped our relationship would help me overcome my childhood. We moved in together but, however close we got, I couldn't tell her about the abuse. Slowly, things started to go wrong – I was moody and cold.

"Then one time we were arguing when I suddenly blurted out, 'How can you treat me like this when I was raped as a child?' After my outburst, we didn't speak about it – it was like it had never happened.

"A year later, we broke up and I realised how much I needed help. I started counselling and confronted my father. He didn't deny it, and I finally felt like I'd repaid him some of the pain he'd caused me.

"Now the abuse no longer dominates my life; and I won't let what I've been through ruin another relationship."

WHAT NOW?

Cosmo's agony aunt Irma Kurtz has this advice if you discover your boyfriend has been abused:

Go at his pace When it comes to getting help or pressing charges against his attacker, he has to do it when he's ready. Just be supportive. Stay calm You may want to cry or get angry, but try to listen as calmly as you can. He's revealing his most painful emotional secrets, so his feelings come first.

Accept change After his secret comes out, you might need to agree not to have sex for a while. Be patient and don't take it personally.

Get help You'll want to support him, but you have to protect yourself too. Speak to your GP or a support charity such as Survivors UK (www. survivorsuk.org; 0845 122 1201) or National Association for People Abused in Childhood (www.napac.org. uk; 0800 085 3330). ◆ ANDREINA CORDANI. PHOTOGRAPHS GETTY, GALLERYSTOCK. "NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED

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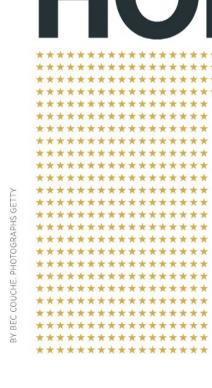
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arely a week goes by before there's another round of clandestine celebrity hook-ups, separations and divorces to dissect.

Some recent casualties of the Hollywood marriage merry-go-round: Courteney Cox and David Arquette, then Christina Aguilera and Jordan Bratman all throwing in the towel.

However, in the well-oiled Hollywood celeb machine, everything's put to good use. According to New York celebrity >

They might live a life we can only dream about but, when it comes to their relationship issues, celebs are a lot like us.

Here, what you can learn from them – and who'll survive in la-la land

Cosmo reports

"Infidelity is the most typical reason cited. Time spent apart and, of course, the pressures from being public figures take a toll"

publicist Niki Turkington, "The public statement confirming the split is often used to deflect or attract attention around the celeb's current project." In the case of Sandra Bullock and Jesse James, news of a divorce between a much-loved actress and a cheating spouse did wonders for the box office. Yet with Christina Aguilera, the news was delayed by several months. The last thing anyone needs to deal with when their album is tanking? Tackling press interview questions regarding their other failing venture: marriage.

So, what's the most common cause of break-ups in Hollywood? According to Californian marital law expert Joel Schwartz, from law firm Fox Rothschild, "Infidelity is the most typical reason cited, and time spent apart – working for extended periods on location – and, of course, the pressures of being public figures take a toll."

With all these extra A-list issues to contend with, sometimes it's a wonder that these famous couples manage to stick things out at all. As an expert in celebrity divorce cases, Joel talks us through a few still-together couples who have remained strong and haven't crumbled under the limelight, giving his predictions and advice on how they should navigate the treacherous Hollywood marriage...



KATY PERRY & RUSSELL BRAND

Their private wedding day

was a surprise, considering they're usually so public about their love for each other that they even use Twitter to wish each other good night.

Reportedly, this pair did not sign a prenup – but as she's a chart-topping

musician and his acting career is soaring, in the event of a split, they have independent sources of income. Russell's well-documented sex and drug addiction 'issue' hasn't marred the relationship thus far, but will he remain a changed man?

STAYING POWER? "Hopefully, Russell's womanising days are over. If both parties earn and have equal income and assets, then the failure to sign a prenup may not necessarily be a mistake," says Joel. "Regardless, prenuptial agreements do not always make for an amicable and inexpensive divorce."



VICTORIA & DAVID BECKHAM

When England's football hero began dating the pop

princess, it seemed too good to last. Yet Posh and Becks have defied the odds the press have stacked against them, despite anorexia speculations, an alleged failed attempt to kidnap Victoria, and claims that David had an affair with his former personal assistant, Rebecca Loos. The super-resilient couple have powered through - and now, almost four children later and with several steamy photo shoots attesting to their undying attraction for each other (every perfume ad they pose for is raunchier than the last), they've become one of the biggest celebrity-couple 'brands' in the world. STAYING POWER? "In the event of a split, the parties will have a difficult time emotionally continuing to do joint photo shoots and be branded as a couple (their his-and-hers fragrance line could be a problem)," says Joel. "However, given that David and Victoria are each successful without the other, they will likely continue to have a solid financial

future even if they're not together."

THE BOUNCE-BACK PARENTS



JESSICA ALBA & CASH

This gorgeous duo tied the knot in

2008 when Jessica was pregnant with their now two-year-old daughter, Honor Marie. Not long before they married, the couple were dogged with infidelity rumours concerning Cash and model Vera Mishina. Since then, more have resurfaced, this time with the finger being pointed at Lindsay Lohan. But Jessica told *Cosmo* the rumours were untrue explaining that her husband was working on a possible TV show with Lohan and, in fact, Lindsay is a friend of hers.

STAYING POWER? "It depends on

STAYING POWER? "It depends on how resistant they are to rumours," says Joel. "Do they each have a thick skin? If they do, and assuming the rumours are simply rumours, things shouldn't end in tears. Celebrities are often faced with rumours – not all result in the breakdown of a strong relationship."

Too popular?

Divorce is a popular pastime in California, even for non-celebs. So much so, web designer John Marcotte is calling an end to it with the 2012 Marriage Protection Act. The push is a satirical statement in reaction to the Californian voters outlawing gay marriage in 2008, citing the need to protect the sanctity of traditional marriage. According to Marcotte, if that's the case, voters should have no problem banning divorce. Quite clever...

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Can your BEST BEST Sort out your life?

They're the ones who are always handing out love/money/life advice, but what if you HAD to take it? Cosmo puts three friendships to the test

hether you're unlucky in love, constantly skint or come out in a cold sweat if you contemplate exercise, there are hundreds of gurus out there selling books and courses promising to change your life. But what if the perfect person to help create a new you is practically on your doorstep? Your friends know you better than anyone else - and everyone has that one woman in their life who seems to have things all figured out. So we asked three Cosmo readers to allow a friend to take over one aspect of her life for a week, in a bid to improve their love life, finances or health. But, did it work?

THE LOVE GURU -

Becky, 24, from London, promised to turn around her unlucky-in-love friend's life. Lorna, 24, has been single for two years

BECKY SAYS: "Lorna's got no problem catching men's eyes. But her strict 'let men do the chasing' policy is causing hotties to slip under her radar – she gets lots of attention but won't approach guys. If I force her to be a bit assertive, I'm sure she'll start bagging more dates." LORNA SAYS: "I'm having palpitations at the very thought of putting my love life in Becky's hands! She's much more confident with men than I am. While she's direct in her pursuit, I rarely let my guard down. Having her dictate my decisions – including any texts I write to men – is going to be interesting..."

*LORNA'S DIARY

Monday "It's day one, and I've barely finished my brekkie when I get a text

from Tom,* a summer fling. We've been texting non-stop for a few months but nothing more has ever happened. I go to reply but stop when I remember that I have to check it's OK with Becky first. To my horror, she tells me not to. 'He's all talk. If he was genuinely interested, something would have happened by now,' she says firmly. Harsh words - but maybe it's what I need to hear." Tuesday "A single thought is going round and round in my head: 'Must not text Tom, must not text Tom...' Becky's contact ban is harder than I thought, and I really miss the banter. But, luckily, I'm texting another guy, who Becky has approved. I can't stop laughing when I email her to see if I can text him, 'Did you have a good weekend?' and >

Wednesday "I get a text from Ollie," a guy I met a few weeks ago at a friend's house party. We'd stayed up all night chatting, and I was hoping he'd get in touch. But instead of letting me see how things pan out, Becky's making me grab the bull by the horns. 'Ask him if he fancies going for a drink, she orders. I'm mortified - I'm asking a guy out on a date! She types out,

'So, when am I going to see you again?" and hits send. Argh!"

"Becky's Thursday "I've spent most of today stressing making me out. 'Why hasn't he grab the bull replied?' I email Becky at lunchtime. by the horns Then again at 4pm. And again at 6pm. and ask a guy 'Stop getting your knickers in a twist,' she on a date" tells me. 'He'll get back to you? Then something amazing happens. My phone rings - and it's Ollie! After a short, flirty chat, we settle on Friday for a date." Friday "It's date night. I meet Ollie at

a small bar, and we talk and drink the

tonight wouldn't have happened if I

night away. As I walk home, I realise that

hadn't asked him. It makes me think that maybe there's something in Becky's more forward approach - although I'd better not tell her that!" Saturday "I spend the day glowing with post-date happiness. Ollie and I have been text-flirting all day. So when I meet Becky for a night out, it's hard to wipe the smile off my face. Until

> suddenly, while we're out, Ollie stops texting. My last message requires a reply - but I'm

left hanging. 'Text him in the morning and find out why he went quiet, Becky suggests. I cringe. Surely she wouldn't make me break my No.1 Man Commandment and double-text him? In the meantime, I meet a hot guy

in the bar called David* and have a cheeky kiss - before failing to give him my number. He was gorgeous, you idiot!' Becky groans. Oops."

Sunday "Disaster. Ollie hasn't texted yet. Or called. However, David has managed to find me on Facebook to ask me out

my surname. 'That's impressive,' Becky laughs. Of course, she thinks I should go for a drink, which means I have no choice. Thankfully, it turns out he's funny, lovely and easy to get on with. I wasn't expecting that - or to arrange date number two right away. 'I told you so,' Becky says when I ring her. Bah."

CONCLUSION: "Phew, what a week! I've had more man prospects in the past seven days than I've had in about a year. Although I was completely out of my comfort zone when Becky made me ask Ollie out, it worked. In future, I'm going to give more men a chance and remember that it's OK to be a little bit forward. I'll definitely continue to take Becky's advice – she's clearly an amazing wing-woman!"

THE DIET GURU -

When it comes to diet and exercise, friends Nicola, 27, and Claire, 30, from Wolverhampton, are complete opposites

CLAIRE SAYS: "My diet is totally different from Nicola's. I feel better living a healthy lifestyle but Nicola is more of a party animal, rarely goes to the gym and enjoys a cocktail... or three. She's still got an annoyingly gorgeous figure but I hope I can inspire her to eat a bit more healthily and exercise. I'm going to text her whenever I eat or

exercise, so she can copy my healthy habits exactly. I wonder how she'll get on..."

NICOLA SAYS: "I'm dreading copying Claire's diet and fitness regime. I can't remember the last time I did exercise that didn't involve dancing in a bar, as I dust off and I tend to count fruit

in cocktails and veg on pizza as my five a day. But I would like to be healthier. And who knows, maybe I'll even manage to lose a few pounds along the way."

*NICOLA'S DIARY

Monday "I read Claire's text over and over: 'Mackerel sandwich and a glass of water.' My mouth is hanging open. She can't be

serious. The first thing she's eating today is a mackerel sandwich? The debate with myself over whether I can face eating one lasts about a minute. No. As it's my day off, I go for a pizza. I do manage to match Claire's dinner of a pasta salad, but I can see this is going to be harder than I

"Iscowl

my gym kit, but after my

workout I feel great"

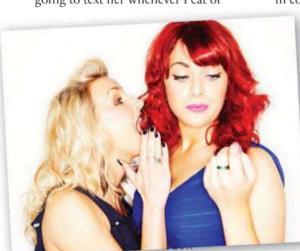
thought. 'How did you get on today?' Claire asks in the evening. 'Fine,' I

lie. I fear my nose will be double its size by the end of the week."

Tuesday "I get a wake-up call at 7.30am telling me that Claire's going for a run. Dusting off my gym kit, I scowl as I begin my jog. But half an

hour later, I've finished my workout and am actually feeling great. In fact, I'm positively buzzing. Maybe this exercise malarkey isn't as bad as I thought. My (well, our) meals today are more to my

CLAIRE WEARS: DRESS, DEBENHAMS. SHOES, KAREN MILLEN. NICOLA WEARS: DRESS, COAST, SHOES, DOROTHY PERKINS





liking, too. Muesli, chicken salad, and a vegetable stir-fry for dinner. Yum. Kind of." Wednesday "I'm not a seafood fan. Actually, let me rephrase that: I loathe seafood. I've already bypassed that mackerel sandwich, but a shiver runs down my spine when I read my menu for the day: Special K, jacket potato with baked beans. And mussels for dinner. But in the spirit of the experiment, I decide to give them a go. So when I meet my friend Laura for dinner, I order mussels. Believe me, it's not something that will ever happen again. They taste like salty chewing gum, and I'm forced to drown the taste with wine ... "

Thursday "Claire agrees to provide me with alternatives for when she's eating fish, which cheers me up no end - and means I have chicken for dinner instead of smoked salmon. I also do an hour at the gym. Claire's given me a three-day pass and warns me I'll be making the most of it!" Friday "Tonight, I'm hitting the town, so I ignore Claire's text telling me to have pasta with pesto for dinner and tuck into spaghetti carbonara and a bottle of wine. She'll never know, I tell myself. But then she texts to inform me we're meeting at the gym tomorrow morning. I'm already tipsy, and I'm out for the whole night. Before I go to bed, I gulp down some water, hoping it'll be enough to get me through the next morning." Saturday "Ow, my head! Claire and I go to the gym, and I can honestly say I've never been in so much pain. I run, I row, I cycle. I almost collapse. I also get an earful because I'm clearly hung-over. But I'm

feeling pretty proud of myself. Claire's going out tonight so I'm allowed to let myself go a bit. But to be honest, I quite fancy a night in. How angelic am I?"

Sunday "I burst out laughing when I receive a text from Claire simply saying, 'Fry-up. Roast dinner.' For the first time ever, I feel more healthy than Claire as

I have a chicken stir-fry."

CONCLUSION: "I'm so glad I'm back to eating what I like without getting pangs of guilt, but eating healthily wasn't actually as hard as I thought. And the unthinkable has happened – I'm a gym convert. I'm not about to ditch my unhealthy ways entirely, but I do genuinely feel better, and I swear my thighs have shrunk already! I might not have stuck to it 100%, but this could be the start of something special..."

THE MONEY GURU

Karen, 25, from Glasgow, vowed to help best friend Deryn, 25, get out of a financial rut

KARENSAYS: "Most of us have uttered the words 'I'm rubbish with money' at some point, but Deryn takes the biscuit. I rarely see her in the same outfit twice, and she's always eating out. But her bank balance can't keep up with her social life, and she won't be able to move out of her mum's place until she starts saving." DERYN SAYS: "I admit I'm a shopaholic, and I go out more than I can afford to. I work in retail, so temptation is everywhere. Karen's financial situation puts mine to shame. She only earns a bit more than me but has a mortgage, while I live at home, and she still manages to save. If anyone can help me, it's Karen."

* DERYN'S DIARY

Monday "I'm looking forward to meeting a friend for lunchtime sushi when my phone goes. It's Karen, and when I tell her my plans, she says, 'Buy a sandwich for lunch and go for a coffee with your friend instead.' There goes my fun lunch hour. She also tells me I have to bring my lunch in from home for the rest of the week. Is it really only Monday...?"

Tuesday "Confident after spending only £5 yesterday, I've got a spring in my step as I head into work. Then I see a new dress on the rails at the shop where I work – it's practically screaming at me to buy it. But it's £150, meaning I'd have to go into my overdraft. 'I want it so much,' I wail to Karen that evening. But she puts her foot down - I'm not allowed it."

Wednesday "I have to turn down another lunch date, compromising with a coffee. In the evening, I whizz round the supermarket, with Karen on the phone. She tells me to get dinners that will last me two nights and stock up on essentials like pasta, sauces and soups. In total, I've spent £25 all day, but the food will last me the rest of the week. I'm starting to feel good about myself." Thursday "After turning down a night out, by the end of the day I haven't spent anything. This is unheard of - but I'm starting to get itchy fingers. I could buy

"I haven't spent anything all day - but I'm starting to get itchy fingers"

> I come off the phone to my gym - my monthly fee is due. 'Maybe you should cancel it until you're in a better position,' Karen suggests. 'Start going out for runs - after all, you live right next to a park.' She's right, of course. Come to think of it, I can't even remember the last time I went to the gym."

Saturday "Karen and I meet at my house to get ready to head out clubbing. I usually buy a new outfit for a big night out. But tonight I raid my wardrobe for a dress I've worn before, and decide to start drinking at home before we go out to save money, too. 'Shall we get a taxi?' I suggest hopefully when we're ready to

trudge to the bus stop instead." Sunday "I treat myself to lunch with a friend thanks to a two-for-one Pizza Express voucher Karen emailed me. 'You deserve it,' she says. 'You've done really well.' The only problem is, I don't call her when I sneak into town after lunch to buy that dress. Sorry, Karen..."

CONCLUSION: "I saved about £70 this week, but I still need to tackle my shopping addiction. Although at times I was ready to kill Karen, she's helped me realise I'm too impulsive with money. I'm confident that her tips have kick-started something I can work on in future." •



AS TOLD TO LORNA GRAY. *NAMES HAVE BEEN CHANGED. HAIR ROISIN DONAGHY FOR PAUL MITCHELL. ' FOR MY FACE COSMETICS. KAREN WEARS: DRESS, OASIS. SHOES, LK BENNETT. DERYN WEARS: DRESS, O

that dress to cheer myself up..."



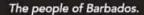
FIRST YOU CAPTURED OUR HEARTS.

THEN YOU MESMERISED THE WORLD.



CONGRATULATIONS RIHANNA.

The first female solo artist in UK chart history to achieve #1 singles in five consecutive years; a three-time Grammy^a winner... and forever our native daughter.







What you told us...

Angry. I'm about to start vet another night shift in my deadend minimum-wage job, having finished university last June as a newly qualified social worker. I can't get a job as a social worker as I don't have enough experience yet; I can't even get a job with a care agency for the same reason - and unfortunately I don't have the time or the money to volunteer. University doesn't prepare you for this at all. Looking back, it seems that they were just getting as many people on the courses as possible for the tuition fees, and convincing us we could all get these magical lovely jobs straight away when we graduated. What am I £25,000 in debt for?' Charlotte Sims, 22. Leicestershire

"I am definitely part of Generation

When reading 'Give Back Our Future!' (February), I gave a sigh of relief. After going to uni for three years, getting myself into a lot of debt and having still not found the job I wanted, it's reassuring to know I'm not the only one in that position. It does seem that young, ambitious women are having to work even harder to get to the place they visualised. The best thing you can do is hold your head high and never give up."

Lauren Goalby, 21,

pretty grim. While new legislation
forces anybody wanting to be regarded
as a professional youth worker to do a degree,
there are hardly any jobs when you're done!
To make matters worse, the fact that uni fees are
going to rise has completely put me off taking my
studies further and gaining a Masters. My fiancé and
I are both at university and the thought of starting
our lives together in £30,000 of debt is terrifying.
I'd marry him tomorrow if I won the Lottery but
I have no idea when we'll actually be able to
afford a wedding."

Jess Rutter, 22,
Teesside

"I'm currently

halfway through my degree

in youth work and youth studies,

but my career prospects are looking

"Having gained a first-class honours degree, I completed an MSc after I was advised that this would heighten my chances of gaining the career I want (I am a criminologist by qualification). Since finishing my MSc in 2009, I've completed three unpaid internships to boost my 'experience'. I've also made it through four intense recruitment processes, only to be told at the last stage that the company had introduced a recruitment freeze! My friends have started to give up on their careers, choosing to battle through until they meet a man and can start a family. I, on the other hand, think we're lucky enough to have it all, but ultimately believe that job satisfaction is important. The roles I've been taking on are

West Midlands

not benefiting me at all, though, which is deeply distressing." Name withheld 'You'd
think no
debt is a good
thing, but
apparently
not!'

"Even though I pay a fortune
each month on rent, I cannot get a
mortgage as I can't afford the massive
deposits the banks are asking for. They
consider I'm too high a risk since I've never
had any real credit history (you'd think no debt is
a good thing, but apparently not!) and because
I have no permanent contract to make the payments.
So in the meantime, my partner and I are paying
ridiculous amounts to live in a flat that I love but
will never be ours, and our monthly outgoings are
too much to save for the sort of deposit we
need for our own place."

South Lanarkshire



happy to talk about physical health and all agree that it's only natural for someone to feel well some days and awful on others. Yet when it comes to mental health, it's a whole different story - we rarely talk about it and, when we do, we feel almost ashamed to admit that we're not 'coping'. However, the fact of the matter is that, just like our physical health, it's only natural to have days when you feel good mentally and others when you feel, frankly, rubbish. As a psychologist, one of the things I often notice is how much advice is given to people to stay physically healthy, but so little exists in terms of being mentally fit. We know we should be eating five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, getting enough sleep, drinking plenty of water, etc, but what would our emotional five a day be? Well, here are mine - and I think

4 Look outwards

they'll work for you too...

One of the best ways to stop worrying about our needs is by supporting others. By doing so, we put into context what it is we really need and what we really want. Research shows that volunteering for a charity helps people feel happier and more content. So every day, look outwards at what you can give to others and then look inwards to reassess how you feel.

Do something you love

The saying goes that, 'Life is what happens to you when you're busy making other plans'. Well, the fact is that if we don't make an effort to do the things that make life meaningful for us then it's unlikely that success, happiness or anything else we desire will fall into our laps. One of the best antidotes to depression is doing one thing every day that gives you joy – whether it's taking your dog for a walk or spending quality time with your friends. At the same time, it's also important that you feel like you're not stagnating, which is why (again) it's vital to make a real effort to do things that give you a sense of accomplishment. Doing this will keep your mood high and work miracles for your confidence.

Busy your mind

One of the best things you can do for your mental health is keep your mind stimulated. We live in a world so saturated with things that take up our time that we rarely think about how we use our time. So instead of spending hours on Facebook, read a blog or newspaper you don't normally read; listen to a talk by someone who's achieved something amazing (try www.ted.com); take a class.

Your mind needs stimulation – it'll allow

Your mind needs stimulation – it'll allow you to build confidence and grow, and to reassess what you're capable of. It's easy to get complacent, going through the motions and not fulfilling your potential. And when we're not fulfilling our potential, it can affect our selfesteem and make it hard to know what we want in life.

Challenge the world around you

we're bombarded by more media images today than at any other time in history.

Each one of those messages is loaded with so many 'shoulds' and 'have tos' that sadly we're prone to simply absorbing them, never questioning whether they're right. So make to point every day of questioning at least one identified that's thrown at you. Challenge the idea that you have to look a certain way to be happy; challenge the idea that a woman's value lies in her ability to attract a man; challenge the idea that you must have that new gadget, dress or pair of shoes. Is that we that new gadget, dress or pair of shoes. Is that we the route to happiness? By taking the time to the and assess what is thrown at you, you will only begin to define what is important to you, but you'll also feel empowered to resist those things that just

See people who make you feel good

People are social. We function best when given the chance to interact and engage with each other. Whether it's making time to meet a friend for a drink or calling your mum, research shows that a good social support network is vital for both our mental and physical health – and that face-to-face contact is better than online chat through Facebook or email. It's also important in terms of making us feel that we're part of something bigger. Investing time in nurturing the relationships with people around you – both family and friends – will give you amazing returns.





What are your 5 a day? Tell us at cosmo.mail@natmags.co.uk

NEW



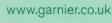






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Missed the last one? It's the most important of the lot. Here's why...

een there, heard it, read it all before... That's probably what you think when people talk about how vital it is to use a condom if you're having casual sex. You'd never run the risk of an STI or unwanted pregnancy, right? So why, once we're in a 'serious relationship', do we ditch the condoms without a second thought? After all, the chances of either of you having an STI are exactly the same after five months together as they were after five minutes.

According to a recent poll, 70% of young couples think discussing STI tests is a good indicator that a relationship will last. Yet an NHS survey revealed that only one in five couples gets tested before giving up condoms. And that's not because they're sure their other half

has a clean bill of health, either – shockingly, almost three-quarters of all 16-30-year-olds won't even discuss their sexual history with a new partner before getting naked.

When Jane*, 24, decided she was ready to stop using condoms with her boyfriend of five months, she gave little thought to the

risks. "While we were dating, my boyfriend had told me he'd slept with 35 women, which should have set alarm bells ringing," she admits. "But although I always asked boyfriends if they had any STIs before ditching the condoms, I always

felt that by that point in a relationship, a certain amount of trust had built up, so I never insisted they get tested."

In fact, her boyfriend *had* contracted an STI from a previous relationship, but had never been diagnosed. It wasn't until he

and Jane broke up – six months after they'd stopped using condoms – that Jane started to show symptoms of genital herpes. But by then it was too late.

"Before I had herpes confirmed by a doctor, I was so stressed I had to miss

work, and I was furious with my ex," she says. "I was too trusting and too in love to worry about it before,

but I've learnt my lesson. I now have yearly STI checks, and I'll be totally open with future partners about my sexual history – the herpes virus is something you have forever.

It's been a terrible thing to go through but I've managed to turn a negative experience into a positive habit."

BLINDED BY LOVE

of people who've

had unprotected

sex have NEVER

been tested

You might be convinced your man is far too nice to be harbouring anything nasty,



"I GET TESTED - EVEN IN A RELATIONSHIP" Ruth Forwood, 24, an MA student

from London, takes her sexual health verv seriously

"I think that if you're mature enough to be having sex, you should be mature enough to get yourself checked out without feeling embarrassed. I had my first STI test when I was 17, and while I was single I had regular checks every six months - even though I always used condoms. My friends often decided to have sex and deal with any consequences later, and some men did try to persuade me not to use condoms, but I've always been very firm. Some STIs, such as chlamydia, can lead to infertility, which is a risk I'm simply not prepared to take.

"I've been in my current relationship for five years, but I still have check-ups every 12-18 months. Some people worry about the test, but it's very simple and stressfree, involving a vaginal and urethral swab, a visual exam and maybe a blood test. I see it as part of my health routine, like going to the dentist.

"Although I trust my current partner completely, women have to realise that people do sometimes lie - and that STI checks can also flag up problems that aren't sexually transmitted, such as bacterial vaginosis. Ultimately, your health is in your hands, and no one else's."

but if he's had unprotected sex even once in the past, he could have something.

"You might have had unprotected sex just the one time, but your partner may have done so with four people, who between them have had unprotected sex with six, and so on," says Robert Mackay, MD of www.thesticlinic.com.

"It's relatively easy to treat most STIs if caught early; chlamydia and gonorrhoea can be treated with antibiotics," adds Robert. "These aren't life-threatening, unlike hepatitis B and C, or HIV."

Okay, so it's not the most romantic pillow talk. But, argues Rebecca Findlay of the Family Planning Association, if you're close enough to have the 'let's can the condoms' conversation, you should be frank about the risks. "Couples don't discuss it as they should, because of embarrassment," she says. "Or they assume STIs happen to other people, not them."

Reassuringly, a survey of Cosmo readers on Cosmopolitan.co.uk reveals that most of you are savvy about your sexual health, insisting you'd never ditch the condoms unless you'd both been checked out.

But even if you've both been given the OK, it's a good idea still to have regular check-ups, as Olivia*, 24, found to her cost. "I get tested between relationships, but caught an STI from my boyfriend a couple of months ago. He told me he'd been tested before, so I agreed to stop using condoms. He didn't mention an unprotected one-night stand he'd had before we met and since his test. I only found out when he developed symptoms of chlamydia - and found I had it too."

Olivia learnt the hard way that the only person you can trust with your sexual health is yourself. But the good news is that getting tested is simple. Websites such as www.fpa. org.uk, and the NHS Direct helpline (0845 4647) can direct you to your nearest GUM clinic, who can give you a free, thorough sexual-health check. So before you ditch the condoms, get checked - otherwise you might find your boyfriend gives you more than just a warm, fuzzy feeling inside. •

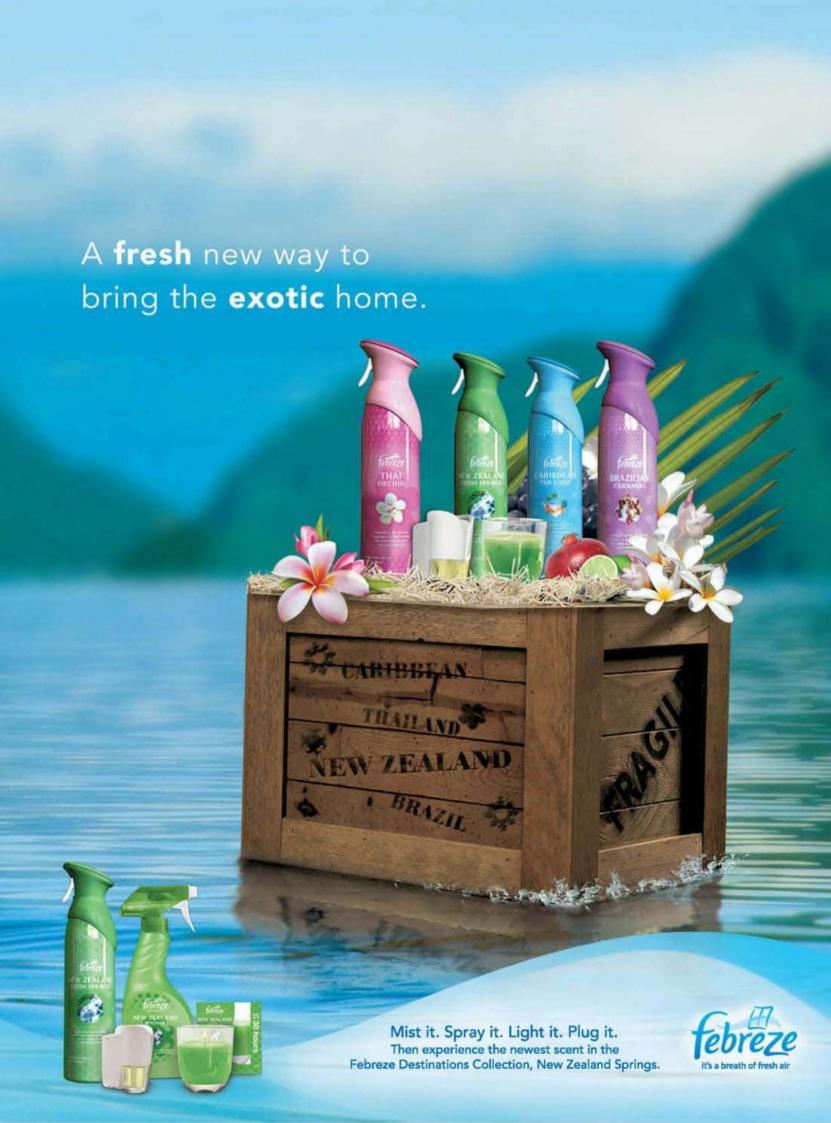
"I'M PRETTY SURE I'M FINE..."

He says he hasn't got any symptoms so that means he's not suffering from an STI. Er, NO!

Even if both of you look and feel perfectly OK, that doesn't necessarily mean you don't have anything nasty lying dormant in your system.

'Some STIs, such as chlamydia, can be asymptomatic - which means the bacteria may be in someone's system for years," says Robert Mackay. "There's also no way to tell how long it's been there, so it's perfectly possible to contract an STI from a faithful partner if they've had unprotected sex even just once with someone else in their lifetime."

Half of all men and 70% of women with chlamydia - the most common STI - won't have any obvious symptoms. The same goes for one in 10 men infected with gonorrhoea. Yet both diseases can cause the heartbreak of infertility. And genital herpes is a very contagious condition that you can pass on even when you're not suffering an outbreak and which, once caught, you'll suffer from for life. So regardless of whether you have any symptoms, don't take any chances.





his new film The Eagle, out now.

What's really on his mind?



WHAT GOES THROUGH MEN'S MINDS...

... about commitment

Is he about to pop the question? *Cosmo*'s Undercover Man susses out the signs

his month, our four friends are in their twenties and live in Brighton. Ollie*, a landscape gardener, is single and Ben, a salesman, has a girlfriend – but as it's early days, he classes himself as single. Pete works in printing and has been with his girlfriend for two years, while Luke is in construction and is in a seven-year relationship. So how do they know you're The One?

Are men really afraid of commitment?

OLLIE: "I'd say yes. Maybe it's because I'm the youngest, but it seems a big thing to stay with one woman for the rest of your life. I think these days you don't need to get married until you're in your late thirties."

BEN: "I'd like to be a dad by 26, and I'd like to be settled by the time I'm 30. But then, I've always had quite an old head on me."

OLLIE: "It's about finding the right girl."

PETE: "The men in my family got married young – and to their first serious girlfriends."

Why does commitment scare men?

OLLIE: "You can't just suit yourself or see your mates as much."

LUKE: "I've always been allowed by my girlfriend to go out when I want. I think that's why we've lasted for seven years."

PETE: "My biggest fear is that I put everything into a relationship, then I worry whether she feels the same."

BEN: "I'm scared to slip into a routine. You can lose that buzz when you settle down." LUKE: "I do sometimes worry that I'm missing out. I've never been a bachelor." Surely there's something good about it?

LUKE: "Stability. Having someone there to chat to."

PETE: "Someone to have a cuddle with who you can have a proper talk to. When you're with your mates you put on a bit of a front, but in a committed relationship she knows all your fears and doubts."

Do you consider commitment when you begin dating a girl?

BEN: "I think women think that way more than guys. All guys think about when they first meet a girl is sleeping with her." Have you ever found yourself 'accidentally' committed to someone?

LUKE: "That happened in my current relationship. We went on a couple of dates

and before I knew it we were going out with each other. She just kept saying, 'What's happening? Are we going to get together?' So eventually I just agreed. Seven years later we're still going – although I wasn't even looking to get into a relationship."

What stops you committing to a girl?

BEN: "If she was too full-on. Her saying, 'I love you' really early on is a killer."
When are you ready to commit?

LUKE: "I get flashes of thinking I'm ready to commit. Then 10 minutes later I'll eat the last biscuit and she'll look at me like she hates me. Then I feel the opposite!" PETE: "My girlfriend says, 'We should get a place together,' then a couple of days later she'll say, 'I want to live on my own, otherwise I'll end up resenting you.' Then, she'll start flicking through a catalogue and go, 'This'll look nice in our place.' I don't know what the hell she wants!" LUKE: "I don't know. I have more doubts when I talk to my friends about it - they influence me a lot. She keeps asking, 'When are we going to Paris so you can propose?' I keep telling her I'm not ready, but she says she'll keep pestering me. Her mum has started asking me about it too, but I'm not going to be forced into it." PETE: "You've been with her seven years!" Tell us your 'I'm in love' moments...

LUKE: "We went camping once, and had been getting on well for weeks and weeks, giggling together. On that holiday, I gave her a 'promise' ring." **PETE:** "It was our first holiday together. We got on like a house on fire, and that's when she realised she really did love me. That was after we'd been together a year."

Are you average?

Wondering if your relationship's on track? Here are the facts...

- In the UK, the average man has his first child wher he's aged 32.
- Young women think 27 is the ideal age for a first baby
- but the average age to have one is 29.
- The average man marries at 30.7, while women on average marry at 28.5.
- Fourteen per cent of people admit they find it hard to say, 'I love you' every day in a committed relationship.
- Men take an average o seven months to say, 'I love you' while women take eight
- More than three-quarters of couples move in together before getting married.



LUKE: "That's still the honeymoon period, a year."

Do your friends' and family's opinions count when it comes to love?

been a few times we've had a big bust-up and I've wanted to walk away.

But I haven't because she's close to my mum and sister, and I get on well with her family. I sometimes think I don't want to go through all that again with another family."

OLLIE: "I was with a girl for a couple of months, but my mates said I could do better. Then I split up with her and one of my friends went out with her! What?!"

How do women encourage men to take their relationship to the next level?

LUKE: "If you go through a tricky situation and she's there for you, that's really good."

PETE: "If she gives you support."

BEN: "The best thing about my girlfriend is that if I'm feeling pressure at work, I can call her and she'll calm me down." **Do you like her to take the initiative?**

BEN: "That was what happened with my girlfriend. I met her, and after a few weeks she started bringing her clothes round. The next thing I know, she's moved in."

PETE: "My girlfriend was spending more time at mine than at her own house. I said she could leave a few things at mine, but she's basically got her own spare room

now! I guess a woman needs her essentials."

OLLIE: "It makes you feel at ease when she starts leaving stuff at your house, though. It makes you think she really does like you."

What about the 'L' word?

BEN: "There should definitely be a gap between making her your girlfriend and you saying, 'I love you.'"

PETE: "I'd had a drink when I said, 'I think I love you.' But she said it straight back. That was about seven months in."

OLLIE: "I do think the word 'love' is thrown around too much."

BEN: "It should be at least a year before you move in together. When I did it after just two months, we argued over bills and would fight over who should do the washing-up."

Marriage or kids – which is the bigger commitment?

LUKE: "I think having kids is the biggest commitment you can make to someone. Children are forever."

PETE: "With a child involved, you'll always have that connection."



Do you think marriage is a big statement of commitment?

BEN: "You can be connected to someone without a piece of paper. There are so many divorces now, all marriage means is a party."

PETE: "I don't have to go to a church or a register office to make that commitment. You just have to act like you're married."

OLLIE: "Women want to have that special day. But if you love someone, why do you have to go to a church to prove it?"

Be honest, when do you go 'exclusive'?

PETE: "I think that conversation happens more in America. I watch programmes with my girlfriend where couples say, 'We're not exclusive,' but I don't get that. I never wanted her to see other men!"

BEN: "When you stop seeing other people, you know you're committed."

OLLIE: "That could happen in the first week you're together."

How does it change your relationship?

BEN: "When you're at the pub you stop joining in with conversations about sex." Have you had a girl say, 'I love you,' and you've not said it back to her?

PETE: "I'm in that situation now. She says, 'I love you,' and I say nothing."

BEN: "That's because you don't love her."

PETE: "No, um..." [looks flustered]

LUKE: "Do you reckon you do love her?"

PETE: "If I'm honest, I think I love her but I'm not in love with her."

LUKE: "I don't know what to do, either. I can't see myself being with anyone other than my girlfriend, yet I can't see myself being with her forever. I'm at a crossroads. One road is babies and happy-ever-after, the other is my career and being a bachelor." **PETE:** "It's like you're scared of splitting up with her, but you're scared of being alone." **LUKE:** "The worst thing about splitting with someone is seeing them with someone else." **OLLIE:** "You don't know what you've got until you lose it..."

Presuming women want commitment from you, what are the signs you're ready?

LUKE: "When you introduce her to your mates, that's a big sign."

PETE: "Or when you get jealous of her talking to other blokes."

And so we leave our Brighton boys. Who knows, next month it could be *your* man our Undercover Man is grilling...

Find out which of our men takes relationships too fast. Go to

WWW.COSMOPOLITAN. CO.UK/UNDERCOVER

Tired of him Williamshing finishing the desired of him with the control of the co

Men can go from, 'Hello' to 'O' in minutes, while we take longer. But getting in sync is possible...



KISSING

SPEED YOURSELF UP

As your neck is nerve-packed, few things turn up the heat like your guy's lips there. Pull your hair aside while kissing and nibble his ear, tilting your neck so it's in his view. If he doesn't take the hint, whisper, "Mmm, kiss my neck." Then moan so he'll know to keep it up.

SLOW HIM DOWN

Avoid tonsil hockey in favour of lips-only kisses and delicate tongue flicks. It sounds gross but research says swapping spit can up his arousal as your saliva has hormones that set him off.

FOREPLAY

SPEED YOURSELF UP

To ensure you'll climax before or at the same time as him, have him stimulate your clitoris ASAP. Put a few drops of lube on his fingers and guide them between your legs. Experts report that circular stimulation, starting slow and building speed, is most effective.

SLOW HIM DOWN

When handling his penis, maintain a soft touch and keep your strokes closer to the base, where he's less sensitive. Vary your moves: he'll love the shifting sensations so much, he won't notice that you're skipping the steady friction that makes him orgasm.

INTERCOURSE

SPEED YOURSELF UP

Girl-on-top grants you control of speed, angle and depth. Instead of moving your hips up and down, slide them back and forth so your clitoris is rubbing against his abdomen. Don't be shy about pushing down hard or increasing the speed. He'll love the intensity.

SLOW HIM DOWN

Long thrusts are the male orgasm's BFF, so keep them to a minimum. In missionary, wrap your legs around his waist so he can't pull out very far, or grab his bum with both hands and pull him close for the same effect.

RIGHT BEFORE YOU 'O'

SPEED YOURSELF UP

Focus on your 'trigger fantasy': a red-hot scene you can call up when you're on the brink but need a push. Think of movie scenes that turn you on, then customise to concoct one that's more specific to your tastes.

SLOW HIM DOWN

If you sense him getting close, switch positions or stop altogether, and kiss. He's really close? Create a ring around the base of his penis with your forefinger and thumb, squeezing firmly. This can act as an emergency brake, buying you more time.

5 (POSED BY MODELS). RESEARCH FROM *101 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT SEX* BY BY DR TAMMY NELSON (£16.99, QUIVER). WITH THANKS TO SEXOLOGIST DR ROBERT BI DOWNLOAD AT WWW.AMAZON.CO.UK) AND GETTING THE SEX YOU



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THE Manual

ere goes: Jack Whitehall's relationship advice. Are you ready? Never trust a man who doesn't have a good relationship with his mother. There you are, ladies. That's it - relationship advice complete.

Now, obviously I'm not foolish enough to think that's the only thing you should look for. There are looks, money, sense of humour... (I'm asked all the time, "Jack, can you laugh a girl into bed?" The answer's no; it's far easier to laugh a girl out of bed.) But the relationship between a man and his mother is important. I'm not saying you want a man who's too close to his mother, because that can be creepy. Like Norman Bates in Psycho keeping his mother's dressed skeleton in the cellar. Definitely too far. Although Norman does get a rough time of it. I mean, let's not forget he was running a successful hotel and, in these times of high unemployment, an established, selfsufficient business in the service industry is not to be sneered at. Okay, maybe Norman isn't the ideal example, but the point still stands - I've never met a man I liked who didn't get on with his mum.

There are just some things in life that are impossible to overcome if you're going to present yourself as a good, rounded and likeable person. Driving a Porsche, rollerblading to work, using the words 'moreish' or 'chillax', using hands-free outside of an automobile, claiming that any book 'changed your life' or 'opened your eyes, or being Richard

Hammond. But, most importantly, not getting along with your mother.

So that's how to sound out a good man. But, once you've found him, how do you snare this mummy's boy away from the metaphorical womb? How can you lure your prince from the family home that is his castle: the fabricconditioned clothes, The Archers omnibus, and the knowledge that when he returns home from the pub later than he said, he'll receive a warm, loving embrace just as if he'd returned from war...

You've got two options. First is natural selection. My mother is forever suggesting I go out with people. My dad is too, but his suggestions are always wildly inappropriate: "Why don't you go out with my friend David's daughter

Rachel?" "She's not my type, Dad." "What's wrong with her?" "Dad, she's 13." Or the infamous dinner conversation I had last year, when he blurted out, "I know! You could go on a date with Jennifer – she's a pretty girl." My mother snapped, "Michael, she's also Jack's cousin!"

Having said this, my mother's suggestions seem only to come from a fairly small pool of her own friends' daughters. The number of times I've been set up with the terrifying offspring of long-lost acquaintances. So being selected via this 'parent's choice' process is hard.

Your other option is to meet him of your own accord, then seek his mother's approval subsequently. But be warned, this is not a task for the faint-hearted. When my mother meets a new girlfriend (or, in her eyes, potential 'son thief') she seems very nice and respectable on the



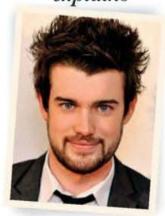
already collating information, judging every facet of this alien in her living room, storing it up to utilise at the flick of a

switch. She's like the East German Stasi in the '60s. Having said that, my mum nearly always gets it right. She's a fantastic judge of character and I, of course, trust her; if my mum green-lights you then that's the deal sealed. So there we are. Two bits of advice for the price of one – impress a man's mother. Because once you've got her on side, he's all yours. For Jack's tour dates and info, go to www.jackwhitehall.com



WHAT*IS* THEIR **MUMS?**

Comedian and selfconfessed mummy's boy Jack Whitehall explains



THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT

Bradley Cooper

He might be going out with Renée Zellweger but that's not about to stop our ongoing 'interest' in Bradley, 36

He has always been sexy
Bradley made his professional acting debut in a TV series you may just have heard of – Sex And The City! He played Jake, one of Carrie's almost one-night stands. YouTube – now!

He's good with his tongue
Il parle couramment le français.
That is, he speaks fluent French. You see,
Bradley? We are made for each other.
closes translation app

He's not just a pretty face
Bradley's not just all blue eyes and firm, tanned, amazing pecs and bum –

The Hangover star's got a brain too. He has an English degree from smarty-pants American university, Georgetown.

You'll never go hungry
Ticking off another of our perfect
man prerequisites, Bradley is a bit of a
masterchef. "I seriously love to cook," he
says. And we seriously love to eat. Perfect!

He's not the jealous type
Bradley is best pals with his Yes Man
co-star Jim Carrey, who used to date
Bradley's now-girlfriend Renée Zellweger.
Awkward anywhere but Hollywood.

He doesn't drink
There'll be no champagne flowing when we marry Bradley – he's teetotal.
"I haven't had a drink in five years," he says. Make ours a lime and soda.

He's an early riser (ahem)
Set your alarm, ladies. Bradley
wakes up every day at around 5am. Well,
we don't mind that at all – after all, we

can think of plenty of things to do with him at that time...

He acts on impulse

Just a few months after hooking up with *Crash* actress Jennifer Esposito in 2006, they married. Only to get divorced four months later. Fast love.

He's a big softie
Bradley is the proud 'father' of
two rescue dogs, Samson and Charlotte.
"They are the best," he says. "I'm a hybrid
of both my dogs. Charlotte loves me
undyingly whereas Samson is stoic and

makes me earn it... They're my kids."

He can be a jerk

On screen, Bradley can be a very convincing bad boy. Before making the A-list, Bradley played Owen Wilson's love rival in *Wedding Crashers*. And we *still* fancied him. Now, that's talent. Bradley's latest film *Limitless* hits cinemas on 18 March.

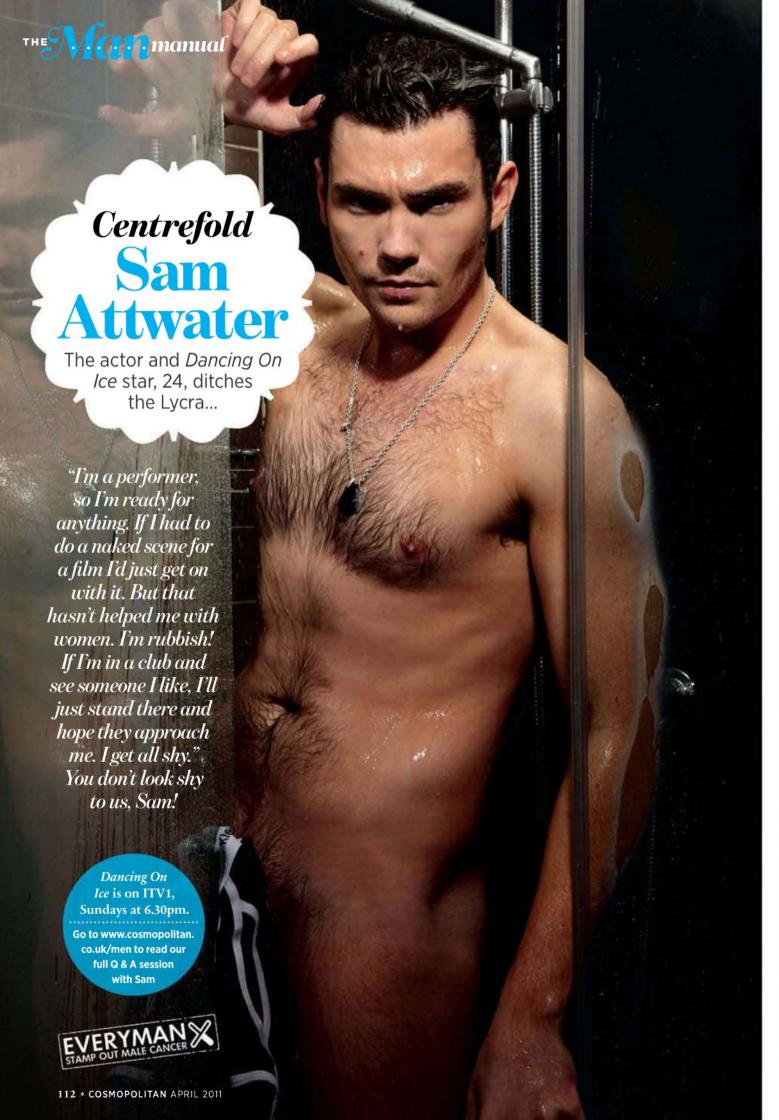


' DEBBIE MCQUOID. PHOTOGRAPH THOMAS WHITESIDE/CONTOURPHOTOS.CC



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BY JACQUI MEDDINGS. PHOTOGRAPH NICKY JOHNSTON. GROOMING ROISIN DONAGHY, WITH THANKS TO WWW.AVIATORFARNBOROUGH.CO.UK. COSMO CENTREFOLD SUPPORTS THE EVERYMAN CAMPAIGN. FOR MORE INFORMATION, OR TO MAKE A DONATION, CALL 0800 731 9468 OR VISIT WWW.EVERYMAN-CAMPAIGN.ORG



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Singuistical

For change-your-life sex advice, ask Cosmo's sex psychotherapist, Rachel Morris

He says I'm rubbish

I'm not as sexually experienced as my boyfriend and I've got no confidence. He says I'm no good on top and my oral does nothing for him. I feel I can't do anything right. Sometimes I hear him sigh and my heart sinks. How can I be better? I've got warning lights flashing in front of my eyes – this guy doesn't deserve to be having sex with you. How dare he undermine your fragile confidence with his own inflated ego? As for experience, if he knew anything about sex, he'd know that the key lies in loving, trusting mutual respect. This is bullying behaviour. Standing up to him is one option, but if that feels too hard, walking away is another. You have the right to be treated with affection and kindness. Once



My boyfriend's upset we don't have much sex but it's not my fault. I'm too tired at night and don't feel like it in the mornings. I like sex in the afternoon but we're at work in the week and weekends fly by. You're both responsible for the sloppy state of your sex life, and for spanking it into shape. He's got the ball rolling by talking about it; now it's your turn. Busy leads to tired, tired to lazy and lazy to apathetic. Your sex life isn't going to jump-start itself you have to make it happen, tired or not. Book a 'sex appointment' for next weekend and stick to it. Plan something new or romantic. Turn the TV off. Don't wait for bedtime. When you're old, you won't be wishing you'd seen more telly in your youth!

They're aggressive

The men I've been with recently have been pushy, acting like they're porn stars! What's going on? Worryingly, more women are complaining about men's aggressive sexual behaviour, especially younger men. It's the internet generation; educated about sex by porn. They see the same images over and over, and mistakenly believe that's everyday sex. Unfortunately, young women get the same misinformation and think it's what's expected of them too. Well, 99% of porn lies about sex and bodies, and informs men that women love being treated like sex dolls. It's up to those of us who know differently to set the record straight.



My penis is too small

I'm a 21-year-old fashion model. My mates think I'm lucky but I'd swap my looks for two more inches on my penis. I'm only four inches fully erect, and I'm still a virgin. I always hoped it would grow but it hasn't. I'll never satisfy a woman. A man who relies on his penis to satisfy a woman's desire is inexperienced or unimaginative; with some it's plain arrogance. A big penis might be nice to look at but it's only one of the many tools in your kit – and when it comes to a woman's orgasm, it's the fourth most important after your mind, fingers and tongue. If you can learn how to engage a woman's brain (find out what turns her on), learn how to kiss like a demon and hone your oral and finger skills, you'll be the perfect lover. This is the best sex advice I have for any man, regardless of his penis size.

Write to: RACHEL MORRIS, Cosmopolitan, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP, or email her at rachel@cosmopolitan.co.uk

i inus oneu/recipt

nou with added on the licious ness

New recipe bueno white gives you even more deliciousness with a light touch. With smooth milk chocolate, crispy wafer and a creamy hazelnut centre, you get all the taste you're looking for, without feeling full.



Indulgence lightly done

ASITIMA.

She's the world's best agony aunt and is here for you when your friends can't be



His family don't like me

My fiancé of three years and I are planning our wedding, but his family are a problem. They tell him he can do better, and always leave me out – even of his birthday celebration. I can't ask not to have them at the wedding, but

I don't want the day ruined. How can I make it work? Is there one warm family member who might help with wedding plans, thus installing a bridge to the others? At the reception, make sure his folks are seated within talking distance of your guests, who will have great things to say about you. Your husband's long-term happiness can prove to them the value of your love. Keep the door open. Never force him into the agonising position of choosing

between you and them. If they remain too narrowminded to accept you, it really will be their loss.

Am I gay, straight or bi?

I've met a wonderful girl and fallen for her. Not enough to call love, but deep. But I've also met an amazing guy who I opened up to. He kissed me and it felt so natural; now when I kiss her it feels wrong. I'm experienced with girls, but I don't know how to please a man. I'm so confused! Good sex is not just a matter of how-to; it's about shared desire and mutual respect between willing adults, regardless of gender. You are confused, yes. But I suspect sexuality is only a part of it; it's also about your own self-worth. So concentrate for a while on who you are, and who you want to be. When you are more secure in yourself, sexual orientation will be clearer.

AGONY LINES

To hear Irma's advice, call the numbers below. Calls last about three minutes and cost 61p per minute. Calls from mobiles and some networks may be higher. These numbers can be reached by callers in the UK and the Channel Islands.

- Could I be gay? 0901 561 6447
- How do I leave a bad relationship? 0901 561 6451
- Am I too easily hurt? 0901 561 6454
- Are we more like friends than lovers? 0901 561 6453
- Can I change my life? 0901 561 6448
- How do I develop my self-esteem? 0901 561 6459

I fancy a married dad

I'm single and in my early twenties, and recently met a guy on a night out. We flirted and kissed, then I found out he's a married dad. But we've started texting and phoning every day, and it's got very steamy. I know his marriage is troubled. What should I do? When a married dad flirts with a stranger and follows up with sexy texts, you bet his marriage is troubled - by him. Tell him to solve his marital problems first before he involves you in them. And until he's free and clear, no more calls or sexy texts - they only feed your wishful thinking and cloud your judgement. You may be tricked into seeing what you want to see, not what is really there.

I hate his job – and friend!

My husband has a friend I don't like at all – he's always making sarcastic jokes about my husband and me. Also, they're partners in an agency for sexy models, and I worry that'll ruin our relationship. What should I do?

Your jealousy of sexy models is a separate issue. If your husband hasn't acted out of line, it could reflect your own insecurity. Get sexy at home; remind him (and yourself) how well suited you are. As for his friend, habitual sarcasm is a defence – he's hiding behind it. Don't let him get you down. Greet his remarks with a knowing smile. But show understanding too, so he can trust you in time. He could even become a family friend.

Write to: ASK IRMA, Cosmopolitan, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP, or email her at irma@cosmopolitan.co.uk



1 1 1 1 1 1 1 Skills

Cosmo's psychologist, Dr Linda Papadopoulos, gives you a mind makeover

NEWSFLASH!

A new study at a Californian university has found that simply anticipating laughter reduces stress hormones and boosts feel-good endorphins. So even just looking forward to watching a good comedy can benefit your health.

DR LINDA SAYS: "Studies like this confirm what, as a psychologist, I see all the time: that the way we think can greatly affect how we feel mentally and physically. Laughter may be the best medicine after all – so next time you feel a cold coming, try a dose of Friends along with the vitamin C!"

How to... enjoy being single

GET TO KNOW YOU AGAIN

Sometimes we get so caught up in a relationship that we lose a bit of ourselves, forgetting what it is we like or feel passionate about. If you find yourself single, take time to get to know yourself again. Eat the foods you love, listen to the music that moves you and do things for the sole purpose of pleasing you.

FOCUS ON FRIENDS Being single doesn't mean you need to become a social recluse. Take time to connect with friends or even to forge new friendships. Spend quality time with the people in your life who you love to be around.

BE POSITIVE Look on being single as a great experience. It

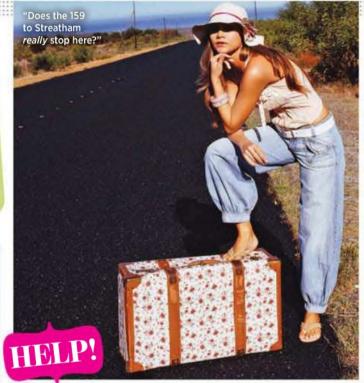
might even be your last chance to be on your own, so enjoy it. And remember – you don't need to be in a relationship to be a complete person – you're complete because of who you are, not because of who you're with...

EXPERIENCE LIFE Socialise, go to the gym, take that art course you've always wanted to do... Experience life on your terms.

CELEBRATE THIS POINT IN

YOUR LIFE We live in such a high-pressured world that we're always worrying about where we're going next. Make a point of just enjoying the now. Treasure this time in your life.





They won't want me to travel

I'm thinking about going travelling for a year. But I'm from quite a traditional family - my parents will think I'm being irresponsible and try to convince me to go to uni instead. It's important that you articulate for yourself why you're not ready to go to university. Think about it in terms of not only how prepared or motivated you feel but also in terms of what you plan to do instead, and why that's preferable. Once you're clear about this, sit down and discuss it calmly with your parents. Tell them it's something you've thought about deeply, and explain your decision. They're likely to worry that you've given up on the idea of university altogether, so if that's not the case, reassure them. Although they might not agree with your decision, they'll respect the fact that you've thought it through and have a plan for what you want to do instead. It's also important to remember that one of the best, but often scariest, things about life as an adult is that we get to make our own decisions, so taking the time to work out what's best for you is an important life lesson. And who knows, traditional or not, your parents ultimately want you to be happy, so they might be more understanding than you think.

Write to: DR LINDA, Cosmopolitan, 72 Broadwick Street, London W1F 9EP, or email her at cosmo.mail@cosmopolitan.co.uk



FUN*FEARLESS OF COSSIDE OF COSSID

THE GETAWAY

Plan your milliondollar escape, dressed to the nines

FEELING FLIRTY

We've got the perfect fun pieces to play with this spring

BRIT-CHICK COOL

Work your casual wear just that little bit harder

HIT LIST

Your first stop for the very best shoes and bags



BY SHELLY VELLA. PHOTOGRAPH BEN RIGGOTT, HAIR AND MAKEUPLISA VALENDA. FOR STOCKISTS, SEE WHERE TO SHOP PAGE

















RELING

Quirky cool that's fun and bright. Time for a playful new spring wardrobe...





OPPOSITE PAGE:
A PLAYSUIT AND
HAWAIIAN-PRINT
SHIRT WILL SCREAM
'PACK ME' FOR
WEEKENDS AWAY

Shirt, £80, Amy Winehouse for Fred Perry . Playsuit, £26.99, New Look . Necklace, £38, Go Jewellery . Bracelets, £35 each, NW3

THIS PAGE:
PLAY WITH YOUR
PRINTS: MIX AND
CLASH USING
COMPLEMENTARY
TONES
Top, £65, Jaeger
Boutique ... Skirt,
F89 NW3 ... Shoes

Top, £65, Jaeger
Boutique . Skirt,
£89, NW3 . Shoes,
£595, Gina Couture . Socks, £3.45, Jonathan
Aston at My Tights . Necklace, £198, Thomas
Sabo . Rings, £72 each,
Swarovski . Syarovski





OPPOSITE PAGE: FLIRTY FLORALS AND A GENTLE RUFFLE ARE THE ULTIMATE GO-TO FOR SPRING STYLE

Dress, £269, DKNY Jeans.
Shoes, £395, Christian
Louboutin. Socks,
£3.55, Trasparenze at
My Tights . Sunglasses,
£105, Marc by Marc
Jacobs Eyewear. Necklace,
£130; bangle, £750, both
Giles for Evoke .

THIS PAGE:
AHOY THERE!
SUNDRESSES NEVER
LOOKED SO CUTE...
STOCKINGS
AND A QUIRKY
TOTE COMPLETE
THE STYLE

Dress, £160, Paul & Joe
Sister ►. Shoes, £595,
Gina Couture ►. Stockings,
£5.50, Jonathan Aston at
My Tights ►. Sunglasses,
£80, Juicy Couture
Eyewear. Bag, £55,
Jaeger Boutique ►.
Necklace, £45; bracelet,
£35, both NW3 ►.



THIS PAGE:
A STRIPED JACKET
LOOKS JUST AS HOT
WORN WITH CUTOFF JEANS AS IT
DOES WITH SEXY
FINE-STRIPED
SHORTS

Jacket, £60, Laura
Ashley . Shorts, £19.99,
New Look . Shoes, £175,
LK Bennett . Socks,
£5.75, Jonathan Aston at
My Tights . Bag, £140,
Love Moschino .
Bracelets, as before

OPPOSITE PAGE:
SPICE UP ROMANTIC
FLORALS WITH
BOHEMIAN
FRINGING AND HOT,
HOT COLOUR

Dress, £75, Monsoon Fusion ≥ Bag, £45, Miss Selfridge ≥ Necklace, £45, Kate Sheridan ≥ >





THIS PAGE:
DOTTY FOR SPOTS.
WE'RE LOVING BIG
BOLD DOTS VERSUS
TEENY ONES COLOUR IS KEY

Cardigan, £45, Monsoon
Fusion . Top, £30,
Dorothy Perkins .
Shorts, £28, Asos .
Shoes, £76, Office .
Socks, £3.45, Jonathan
Aston at My Tights .
Sunglasses, £16, Jeepers
Peepers . Bag, £245,
Cheet . Necklace, £28,
Go Jewellery . Bracelets,
£19 each, Swarovski . ■

OPPOSITE PAGE: GIRLY GINGHAM LOOKS GREAT ROCKED WITH HOT REDS

Cardigan, £69, NW3 ...
Dress, £40, Asos ...
Shoes, £335, Paul &
Joe ... Socks, £3.45,
Trasparenze at My
Tights ... Bag, £99,
Jaeger Boutique ...
Necklace, £198, Thomas
Sabo ...





THIS PAGE: CHANNEL YOUR INNER WILD GIRL: OPT FOR BOLDER PRINTS AND FUN ACCESSORIES

Dress, £340, Anglomania 💌. Shoes, £635, Rupert Sanderson ►. Socks, £6, Jonathan Aston at My Tights 2.3. Bag, £265; necklace, £130, both Vivienne Westwood 💌

OPPOSITE PAGE:
UPDATE YOUR
NAUTICAL STRIPES,
AND BUY INTO
COLOUR AND
PRETTY BOWS
Top, £26.99, River
Island ★. Sunglasses,
£79, Carrera by Safilo ★.
Ping £27 Tatty

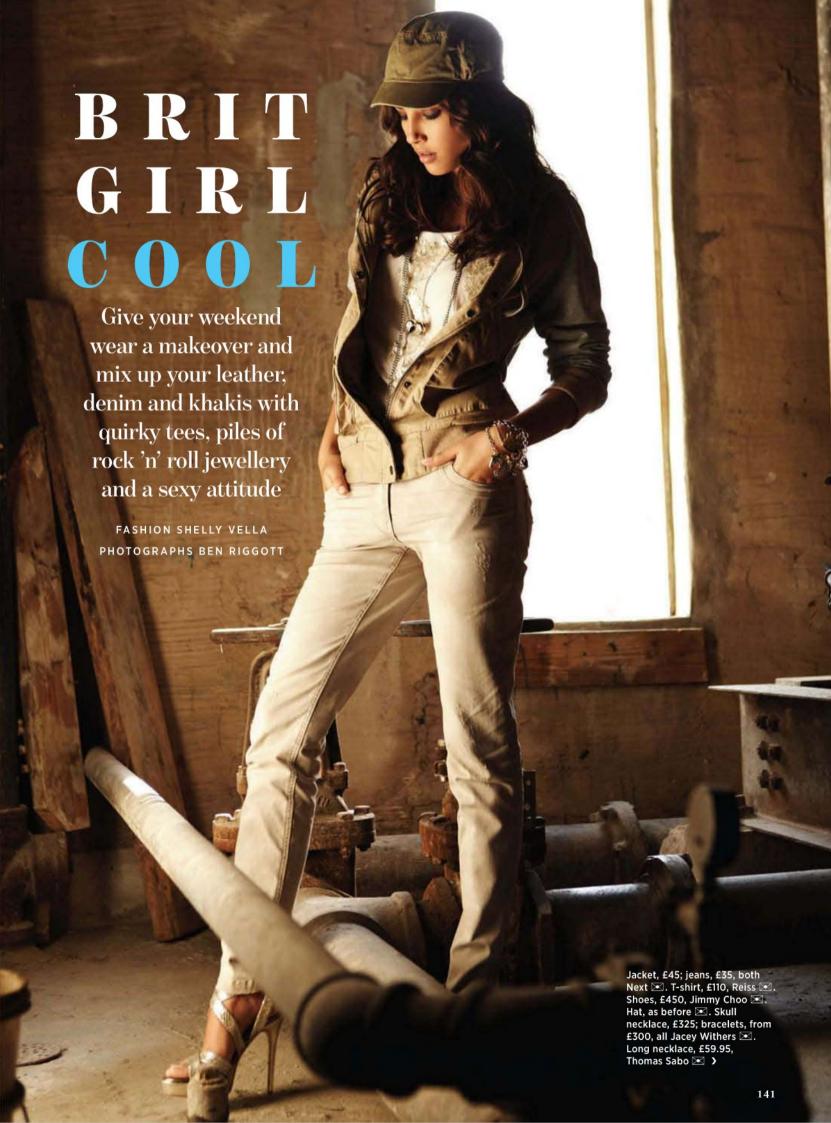
Ring, £27, Tatty Devine 💌

Hair and makeup: Lisa Valencia, using Chanel SS11 and Kérastase. Model: Olga M at Marilyn NYC. **Fashion Assistant:** Clare Smith. Thanks to Lisa at The Production Factory, Miami

For stockists, see Where To Shop page



















































£50, Aldo 🗷

Big canvas bags





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Photographs:
Objective Image
Backstage pictures:
Jason Lloyd-Evans
Fashion Assistants:
Natasha Guiotto,
Sarah Katchis

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A-LIST

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Cosmoshops

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- Cosmo Travel Brush Set
- Cosmo Blend Perfection Sponge
- Cosmo Retractable Blusher Brush
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The new season's best buys, straight from the catwalk to your wardrobe!





Cosmo**shops**







IN BLOOM What's more spring-like than a pretty, ditzy

floral print?
Top, £25, Topshop





GRRRRREAT!
Bright and vibrant, this is the summer version of winter's big trend.
Dress, £40, Pop by PPQ at Very







RETRO SUNNIES

The bigger and rounder the better. Get some vintage chic! Sunglasses, £12.99, River Island













HEART A broad forehead that tapers to a neat chin suits rounded or square styles, but not ones with details at the temples – these can emphasise broadness.

TRIANGULAR If you're wider at the jaw and narrower at the eyes, go for frames with strong shape and bold colour, to balance the face. Avoid small frames.

ROUND A round face with wide forehead, full cheeks and round chin suits angular, geometric styles. Avoid oval or round frames.

OVAL If your face is evenly proportioned, almost all frames will suit you. Have fun experimenting with some edgy geometric styles.

SQUARE Square faces with a wide forehead, jaw and square chin need to go

for oval frames that soften the jawline. Angular frames should be avoided.

RECTANGLE If you have high cheekbones and a deep forehead, go for a wide frame with a strong top line. Avoid small, square styles.

Available exclusively at Specsavers, Gok's first ange of glasses are priced at £99 each – with wo for one on all frames, "The 30 stylish frames make it easy to choose lattering, fashion-forward classes that you love.



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chance to win a VIP makeover (including £150 of Specsavers vouchers, a Cosmo pamper pack and £200 to splash with a personal shopper) head to www.cosmopolitan.co.uk/specsavers

cosmopromotion

Gok's PERFECT FIT

Cosmo hit the streets to accessorise these four fashionistas with fabulous eyewear, Gok-style

ok Wan and Specsavers have come to our rescue with fabulous frames and advice on how to wear them. As a general rule, Gok advises that frames should be no higher than the line of your eyebrows and that the lower edge should never sit on your cheeks, even when you smile. If only he could help us find the perfect man too...



GOK'S GLASSES GAVE EACH OF THESE LADIES' LOOKS A STYLE INJECTION THEY LOVED...

WINONA, 35 SAYS: "I really

like the Gok Wan glasses that were selected for me today – they felt very comfortable and I would definitely consider buying them. Tell Gok I love the range!"

MARGARET, 23 SAYS: "

wear glasses more as a necessity than an accessory but I really like these frames -

they're very on trend."

3 GEORGIA, 23 SAYS: "I usually wear contacts, but I like the new Gok Wan range and would consider buying a pair"

VICKY, 26 SAYS: "I liked the pair selected from the range – they look better on me

expected them to and they suit my face shape nicely."









largaret wears:





Beattle Bible

Packed with more beauty tips than you can possibly handle!

MOUTH TO MOUTH

Scorching shades for the hottest lips

THIS WORKS!

The beauty team tell you what they use

WHAT MEN WANT Makeup looks to make him drool!



HOTS HPS

Every A-lister knows that the quickest, easiest way to boost your sex appeal is to unleash those lips...

WORDS AND STYLING INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN
PHOTOGRAPHS JAMIE NELSON

Red alert

PORCELAIN SKIN

(think Christina Hendricks, Lucy Liu)

"Go for blue-based reds, like cherry, plus plum and wine shades," says makeup artist Chase Aston. "Brownreds will wash you out, so avoid them." TRY: Marks & Spencer Perfection Perfect Moisture Lipstick in Scarlet, £6 All For Eve Lipstick by Daniel Sandler in Eve Red, £10

Avon Ultra Colour Rich Mega Impact

GOLDEN SKIN

(think Cheryl Cole, Cameron Diaz)

Lipstick in Charged Cherry, £8

Skins with warm undertones want to go for bright tomato or fire-engine reds. "Pinker shades of red can look too garish on golden skin," says lipstick guru Poppy King.
TRY: No7 and Poppy King Lip Gloss in History, £11
Clarins Rouge Prodige Lipstick in Red Prodige, £16.34
Eyeko Liptastik Glossy Lip Pen in Lip Lover, £6.50

OLIVE SKIN

(think J-Lo, Nicole Scherzinger)

"Steer towards burnt, orange-based reds: a deep ruby or russet looks seductive but not too clownish," says Poppy.

TRY: Rimmel Colour Show Off Lipstick in Red Fever, £6.29 Lipstick Queen Lipstick in Saint Rust, £17

Bourjois Rouge Soyeux Lipstick in Sweet Kiss Naturel, £7.99

DARK SKIN

(think Alexandra Burke, model Alek Wek)

"Most warm-toned black skins are best off with tomato reds, but Alek's blue-based black skin suits deep cherry reds," says makeup artist Karen Mason.

TRY: Makeup Store Gloss Lips in Indi, £13
Chanel Rouge Coco Hydrating C

Chanel Rouge Coco Hydrating Crème Lip Colour in Paris, £21.50 Tom Ford Lip Color in Cherry Lush, £35 >







BRIGHT-LIPS TIPS AND TRICKS

- "You know you've found the right shade when it enhances your skin tone, makes your eyes look brighter and gives your face a lift," says Bobbi Brown's head of artistry, Paul Herrington.
- "Extreme brights can look fake on black skin," says Karen. "Keep the colour sheer or blotted so it's less overnowering."
- "The brighter you go on the lips, the more simple the rest of your makeup should be," says Karen.
- "Brights can drain the skin, so always warm it up with some rosy blusher, and make sure you cover up blemishes and dark circles," advises Kay.
- "To find your perfect pink, match it to your gums," says Chase.
- "Bubblegum lips are best teamed with a rosy blush, not loads of bronzer and eye makeup. Unless you want to look like Jordan," warns Karen.
- "Red with blue undertones (like cherry) make teeth seem whiter. But blue-based pinks (such as bubblegum pink or fuchsia) play up any yellowness, so avoid if your teeth are offwhite!" says Cosmo's Beauty Director Ingeborg van Lotringen.
- "To get the exact colour you see in the tube, first fill out your lips with a flesh-toned lipliner to 'neutralise' any pigment in them," says Chase.
- "Perfectly lined and painted bold lips have a retro, 'Mad Men' feel," says Poppy. "Loud colour slicked on straight from the tube is more modern-looking."
 "To ease yourself into bright lips, apply a clear."
- bright lips, apply a clear stick balm and dab a high-pigment lipstick on top with your finger," suggests Chase. "Then try a little more
- "To keep things modern, never match your lipstick with your nail polish or your outfit," says Paul.

Pink punch

PORCELAIN SKIN

"Bubblegum pink, magenta or other pinks with a lot of white work best on porcelain skins," says Myface.cosmetics creative director Kay Montano.
TRY: Collection 2000 Lock 'n Hold Lipgloss in Body Pop, £2.99
Paul & Joe C Lipstick in 069, £15
Famous Diamond Shine Lipgloss

GOLDEN SKIN

in Pink Pop, £4

"Choose a vibrant, candy-stripe pink or a '60s baby-doll coral pink. Bluish or silvery pinks can look ageing on golden skin," says Karen. TRY: Laura Mercier Gel Lipstick in

TRY: Laura Mercier Gel Lipstick in Hibiscus Bloom, £18.50 L'Oréal Paris Color Riche Lipstick in Pink Fever, £8.16 Barry M Lip Paint in Peachy Pink 147, £4.49

OLIVE SKIN

Fuchsia or pinky peaches are beautiful against olive skin. "But neon or bubblegum pinks look a bit 'wrong side of the tracks,'" says Chase.
TRY: YSL Rouge Pur Couture in Le Fuchsia, £22.50
Cosmetics À La Carte Lip Gloss in Peach, £18
Dior Serum de Rouge in Pink Coral 240, £25

DARK SKIN

"Raspberry or watermelon pinks look great on dark skins with orange undertones; purple-toned pinks flatter blue-black skins," says Kay.
TRY: Guerlain Kiss Kiss Gloss in Rosy Plum, £20
Estée Lauder Pure Colour Lipstick in Raspberry, £18
Rouge d'Armani in Rouge 400, £23



---- Orange crusb

PORCELAIN SKIN

"Look for candy orange with a hint of pink – anything too citrusy will clash," says Chase.

TRY: The Body Shop Colourglide Lip Colour in Coral Splash, £9 Max Factor Vibrant Curve Effect Lip Gloss in Dominant, £7.99 Bobbi Brown Lip Gloss in Tangerine, £14.50

GOLDEN SKIN

"Soft, clear oranges or warm, peachy oranges are super-flattering against golden skin tones," says Poppy.

TRY: MeMeMe Light Me Up Lipgloss in Blaze. £6.99

Clinique Butter Shine Lipstick in Ambrosia, £15

Givenchy Gloss Interdit in Candide Tangerine, £18

OLIVE SKIN

"This skin tone loves a zesty citrus orange; it's really brightening," says Karen.

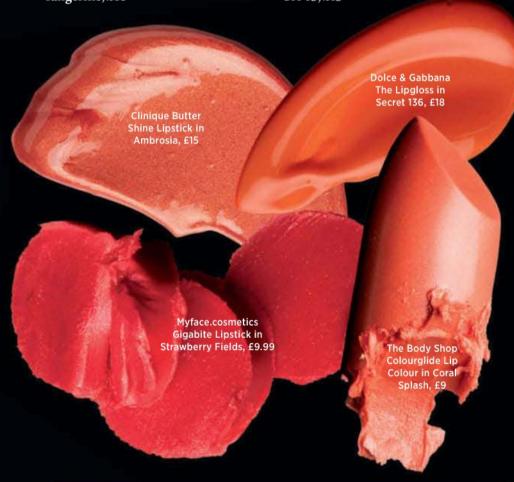
TRY: Mac Lipstick in Morange, £13.50 Nars Lip Gloss in Sunset Strip, £17 Dolce & Gabbana The Lipgloss in Secret 136, £18

DARK SKIN

"Bold orange can look 'punk' on black skins," says Kay. "Opt instead for burnt, golden orange for warm black skin, or a watermelon shade for ebony skin."

TRY: Myface.cosmetics Gigabite Lipstick in Strawberry Fields, £9.99 Sleek Pout Polish in Electro Peach, £4.29

RMK Glosslips in Shiny Clear Orange SH-03, £15



"THROUGHOUT TIME THERE HAS ALWAYS BEEN A FASCINATION WITH A WOMAN'S MOUTH. BOLD, GLOSSY LIPS ARE UNDENIABLY PROVOCATIVE" Tom Ford

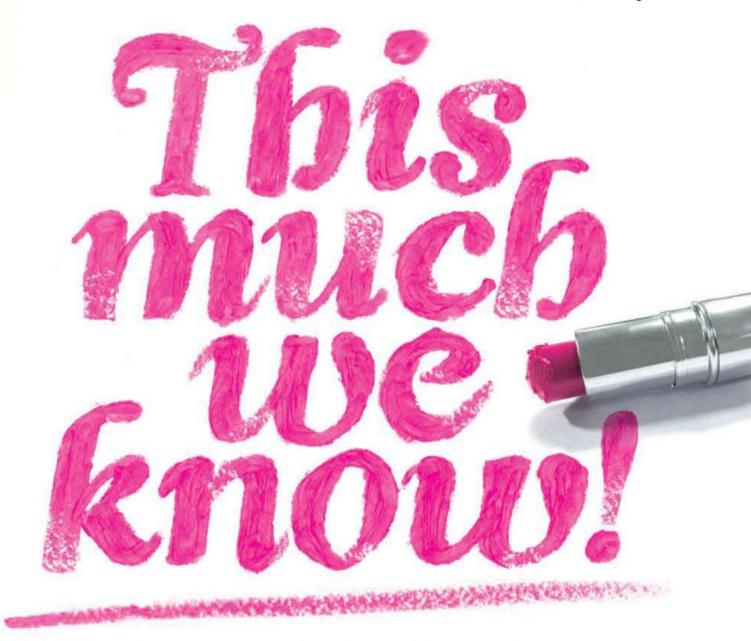
APPLICATION STATION

- Sheer glosses give the illusion of plumpness, so choose these if your lips are thin. Apply over a waxy balm for staying power.
- Liner on the very outer edge of the lips can help them look bigger, but never draw on the skin outside the lip. Avoid liner on the outer corners to 'open' the lips.
- If you've got big lips and you want to make them look less prominent, apply colour to the centre and work outwards with a brush, fading out towards the edges.
- If your bottom lip is bigger than the top one, use lipliner only on the top lip.
- Good for touching up without a mirror: coloured balms and lipsticks that come in skinny tubes.
- A stain topped with gloss fades more evenly than a longlasting lipstick, which can leave you with just coloured edges.
- All makeup artists line lips with short, feathery strokes, then fill out the entire lip with liner before topping it with matching lip colour it's the best way to make colour last. Or use a fleshy, lip-toned pencil.
- Other long-last and no-bleed rules: dip a cotton bud into loose translucent powder and run along the lip line. Then apply colour with a lip brush in thin layers, blotting in-between with a tissue. Avoid gloss.
- Lip balm can dilute colour, so use a hydrating lip base (like Elizabeth Arden Advanced Lip Fix Cream, £18) instead. Or top balm with lipliner.
- Chapped or flaky lips will ruin even the most gorgeous lip colour. Rub them regularly with a wet flannel, a little sugar or a lip scrub such as Comfort Zone Lip Blooming Scrub, £12









The Cosmo beauty team is bombarded daily with products and gadgets. No one knows better what will really work for you



BEAUTY DIRECTOR INGEBORG VAN LOTRINGEN



BEAUTY EDITOR KATE TURNER



BEAUTY ASSISTANT
CASSIE POWNEY

ith a combined 22 years in the beauty business, we've tried more than our fair share of lotions and potions. But when one of us 'fessed up to using the same eyeliner every day for three years, we realised we *all* use an amazing number of the same products over and over again, despite a mountain of new stuff hitting our desks every week. Why? Because they work *really* well. Cue furious list-writing of all our life-changing products and most-

well. Cue furious list-writing of all our life-changing products and mostused beauty tricks. We couldn't bear to keep them to ourselves, so here's a little insight into what goes on in our bathrooms.

MAKEUP

*Our most-used brands

Mac, Bobbi Brown, Rimmel

Concealer and blusher are amazing secret weapons. Smooth some liquid concealer over dark circles (we all love Rimmel Match Perfection Illuminating Concealer, £5.99) and rosy blush on your cheek apples (try Giorgio Armani Blushing Fabric Second Skin Blush, £28), and marvel at how fresh you look. Inge

Back in the '80s, my best friend's mum taught me to pull my eyelid taut and trace my top lash line with eye pencil. It's still the best instant eye-opener – I don't even go to the gym without doing it. Clinique

Beauty Bible Cream Sh in Starry a favouritt A tint be ap

Rimmel Lasting

Finish Lipstick

£4.99

Cream Shaper For Eyes in Starry Plum, £13, is a favourite. *Inge*

A tinted lip balm can be applied without a mirror so is perfect for a spruce-up on the go. I can't live without Korres Lip Butters in Wild Rose and Plum, £6. They make teeth look whiter too! Inge

4 I tend to splash out on face products but

happily stick to high-street makeup. Some of my best finds outperform their designer rivals, such as Max Factor Masterpiece Max Mascara, £9.99, Bourjois Blusher, £7.49, and Rimmel Lasting Finish Lipstick, £4.99. Kate I've got really oily skin and it's hard keeping shine at bay. I've tried loads of powders but Mac Blot Pressed

Powder, £17, is simply the best. Kate

Every girl needs a pretty, everyday eye colour. My trusty fave is Urban Decay Primer Potion in Sin, £12. Kate

I hate chipped nail varnish so I always carry my polish over the edge of the nail to avoid creating edges that might catch and tear. Then I run my fingers under ice-cold water to set the polish completely. *Cassie*

I use Bobbi Brown brushes, from £20.50,

avoid transferring any nasties to my skin. I wash them with whatever shampoo I have to hand as it leaves the bristles

Cassie



*Our most-used brands Estée Lauder, Clinique, Liz Earle

My before-bed tip for parched skin: layer a hydrating serum with hyaluronic acid under a rich night cream, then top with a few drops of facial oil. My favourite cocktail is Estée Lauder Advanced Night Repair, £50 + Emma Hardie Amazing Face Rejuvenating Night Cream, £56 + Trilogy Organic Rosehip Oil, £16.50. Inge

The secret to great skin is regular exercise. Consistency is also key: cleanse, moisturise, protect (with SPF) and nourish (with decent food and added antioxidants in your skincare). *Inge*

I love Ole Henriksen skincare. His plant-based, cruelty-free products are gorgeous to use and really work. *Kate*

Interviewing countless facialists over the years, one trick stands out: daily facial massage. It does everything from preventing wrinkles to clearing

breakouts. I massage every night with Liz Earle Cleanse & Polish, £11.50. Kate

Origins VitaZing Energy-Boosting Moisturiser, £25,

obsession. It's slightly tinted and gives skin the most amazing glow. Kate

To remove makeup, I massage Shu Uemura High Performance Balancing Cleansing Oil, £27, into my skin and remove it with a cotton pad or face wipe. The oily texture doesn't dehydrate or drag on the skin. Cassie

I've been using MyLash (www. mylash.org) for a couple of months now. It's a prescribed lashgrowth serum. A bit pricey at £200, but it's already really extended my lashes – even my friends have noticed a difference. Cassie



Shu us

Shu Uemura High Performance Balancing Cleansing Oil, £27









3am feed? What 3am feed?



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- 1 Refreshes and hydrates tired-looking eyes.
- 2 Covers dark circles in a flash.

www.garnier.co.uk



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Makeup men, cant resist

When men say they prefer you without makeup, do they really mean it? We put it to the test and then asked experts how to nail the au naturel look...

e know you choose the makeup that suits you – as you should – but we can't say we're not interested in what men think too. So we polled a number of them recently, asking if they prefer women looking natural or wearing makeup, and 82% said they preferred the former. But then we showed them two different photos of the same celebs: one sporting barely any makeup and one with a more polished look. On average, 71% picked the latter. Why the disconnect?

"To women, natural means lipgloss and not much else," says Clarins makeup artist Pati Dubroff. But guys (who are mostly clueless about cosmetics) associate 'natural' with smooth skin, sparkling eyes and plump, alluring lips – all features that signal the ability to reproduce, notes anthropologist Helen Fisher PhD. In other words, they love makeup that gives you an even skin tone and a subtle yet noticeable amount of colour. Here's how to fake perfection...

Nothing makes you look more overdone than a heavy layer of foundation that obliterates any sign of your natural skin tone, "After applying foundation, concealer and powder, you should see an even surface, as well as natural traits like freckles," says celeb makeup artist Rachel Goodwin. Here are her how-tos:

- Dampen a sponge with water (we're obsessed with Beautyblender, £14.50, an orb-like sponge tool that works with the contours of your face). "Moisture helps thin the foundation, giving you an even application," says Rachel.
- Put a coin-sized drop of foundation (those like Rimmel Match Perfection Foundation, £8.99, keep skin fresh and dewy) on the back of your hand, and dip your sponge in it. Start in the centre of your face - that's where you need the most coverage, thanks to imperfections like under-eye circles - and tap the sponge onto your skin, blending the colour outwards so it fades at the edges of your face. "This way, you won't have a dark face and light neck," adds Rachel.
- 3 Now rub your clean, dry hands over your face (only using light pressure) like you're applying moisturiser. "The heat from your palms ensures the foundation is seamless and removes any thick spots," says Rachel.
- 4 Finally, use a sponge to press powder onto your T-zone only. "This will head off shine while preserving the radiance on your cheeks," says celeb makeup artist Liz Pugh.

Go with a subtle glow

"The purpose of blush is to mimic a healthy glow, as if you just got out of a yoga class," says celeb makeup artist Kristofer Buckle. These foolproof steps offer a lit-from-within finish:

- To find a colour match, check the inside of your bottom lip. "As blood is so close to the surface, this area is perfect for revealing your natural flush," explains Kristofer.
- Now you know your colour, get a cream blush. Pros prefer cream, as it melts into your skin (thanks to your natural oils) and doesn't look chalky. Use your fingers to lightly dab it on the apples (the plumpest part) of your cheeks.
- 3 Press the leftover blush on your fingers up your cheekbones. "It's just enough pigment to create the illusion of the blush fading as it gets higher - like a real flush," says Kristofer.



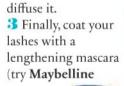


Define your eyes... just enough

Guys are drawn to a woman with welldefined eyes and long, thick lashes. Experts say men see them as a sign of femininity. Amp up your eyes discreetly with these tips:

Always curl your lashes. "Most women's lashes lie flat or point down, so curling them makes the eyes appear larger," says makeup artist Napoleon Perdis.

2 Next, to enhance your lash line in a way that won't look artificial, grab a rich cocoa brown (for light skin) or black (for darker complexions) eyeliner (we like Chanel Precision Eye Definer in Brun, £16, and Revlon Luxurious Color Kohl Eveliner in Black Truffle, £6.99). Apply only along your upper lash line, so that it gets between the lashes, and run a cotton



bud across the line to



New York 'One By One' Mascara, £8.99). Do two coats. "The first offers length; the second, fullness and definition," says Napoleon. Be sure to add the second layer while the first is still damp, to avoid clumps.

Create kissable lips

The qualities men go for in a kiss: soft lips with a rosy tint (it goes back to fertility!). To get the effect, you need moisture to create plumpness, and sheer colour:

Prime your mouth by applying balm with your fingers, which helps it get into the cracks in your lips. Work it in a circular motion for 30 seconds to crank up blood circulation (important for the next step). Find a shade of lipstick that matches the colour of your lips (we like Clarins Rouge Prodige Lipstick in Rosewood, £16, as it works for most skin tones). "Revving up the circulation causes lips to temporarily appear a shade or two darker than usual - the ideal shade for you," says Rachel.

Next, press – don't glide (it'll use too much pigment) colour onto your lips from the case. This creates a stainlike finish, which looks more believable. Trace a cotton bud over your lips to remove excess colour.

💶 Top lips with a sheer gloss (try Carmex Moisturising Lip Balm, £2.49). "Apply it more heavily in the centre of your lips to reflect light, creating the illusion of a plumper pucker," suggests Rachel. •

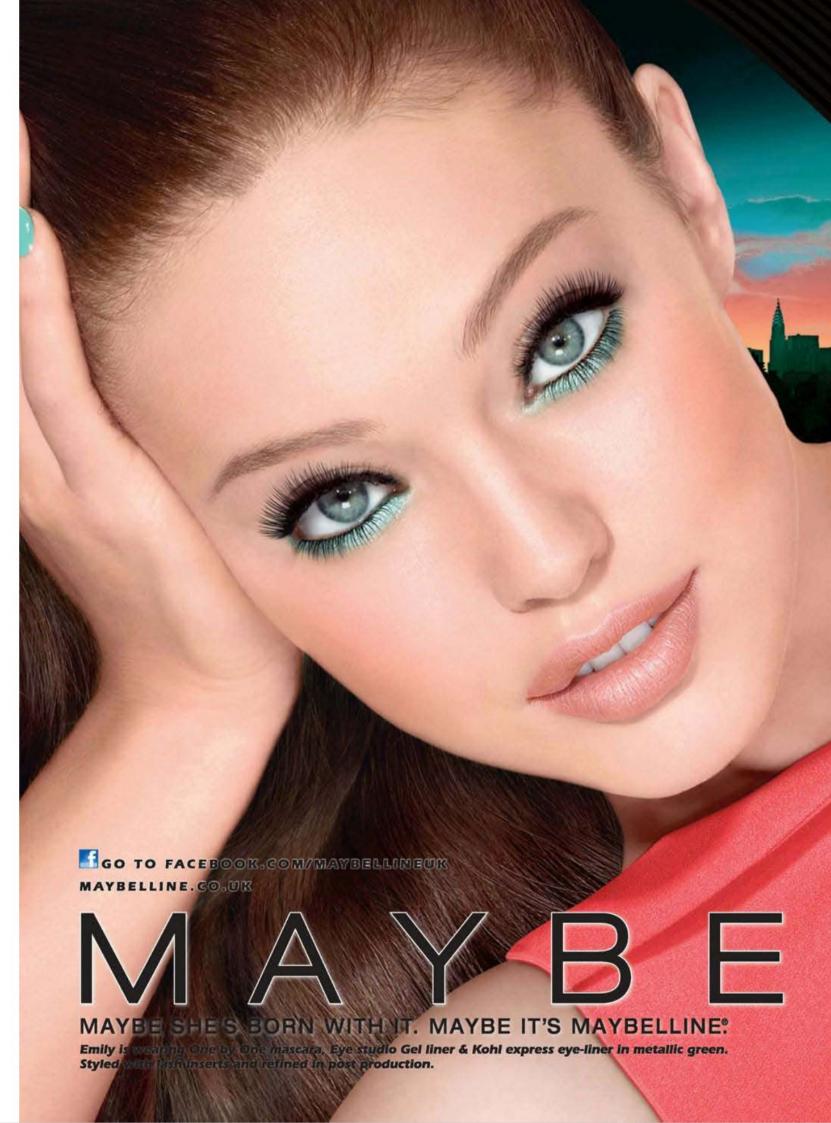
JESSICA R WHITE. PHOTOGRAPHS WENN.COM, CAPITAL PICTURES, XPOSUREPHOTOS.COM. *FOR STOCKISTS, SEE WHERE TO SHOP PAGE*



Beauty Buzz

This month, Cosmo's experts spritz spring scents, sample super serums and test a brilliant new moisturising oil







You tried it...

OILY SKIN SOLUTIONS

Fed up with looking like a pimply teenager? This month our readers are blitzing their blemishes with six new anti-oil crusaders

THE DOCTOR BRAND BLEMISH
RELIEF STARTER KIT, £19.95
LAUREN HOLDEN, 26,
COPYWRITER, LANCASTER



THE PACK SAYS: A three-step regime for everyday use, with a cleanser, treatment and moisturiser to clear skin of current breakouts and also continue to combat future blemishes. YOU SAY: "I've had problem skin for years, and tried everything. This routine only takes three minutes and I noticed an improvement after just a few goes. It smells clean and fresh, the Soothing Lotion really calms my problem areas and my complexion is noticeably smoother."

SOAP & GLORY CLEAR HERE T-ZONE OIL-CONTROL DAILY FACIAL MOISTURE LOTION, £8 SARAH-LEANNE GEORGE, 22, JOURNALISM STUDENT, MONMOUTHSHIRE



THE PACK SAYS: Has a pore-shrinking and mattifying complex to smooth, exfoliate and prevent blemishes by reducing under-surface substances that cause your pores to clog.

YOU SAY: "As it claims, this mattifies as well as moisturises. The lotion is light, soothing and absorbs really quickly. Despite using a 'generous' amount as instructed, my skin never felt oily; just nicely moisturised. I've not suffered one breakout since using this, so I'd highly recommend it."

SARAH CHAPMAN SKINESIS OVERNIGHT EXFOLIATING BOOSTER, £48 AMRITA JAURRE, 23, JUNIOR PR ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE, MIDDLESEX



THE PACK SAYS: Contains a potent cocktail of non-abrasive skin resurfacers, such as lactic acid, willow bark and retinol, to accelerate natural skin renewal and help prevent clogged pores. YOU SAY: "I get frequent breakouts, so my skin often looks dull and uneven. The serum went into my skin easily with no sticky residue. I wouldn't say there were any immediate effects, but my problem areas do seem less inflamed, so I'm hopeful that it'll grow more effective over time."

DR NICK LOWE COOLING
MENTHOL FACIAL SCRUB, £10.99
VICTORIA PETKOVIC-SHORT, 21,
MARKETING EXECUTIVE, CHELTENHAM



THE PACK SAYS: This menthol-based creamy exfoliator uses micro beads to purify pores, and soothe and stimulate cell renewal, making it excellent for blemish-prone skin.

YOU SAY: "This is good for oily skin as the micro beads don't dissolve too quickly. I liked the fresh menthol feel, although the 'tingle' did get a bit much. My skin visibly improved during the day, but the effects didn't last long; by the evening, it actually felt oilier than normal."

GOOD THINGS STAY CLEAR PURIFYING CLEANSER, £4.99 MEL LILEY, 23, SCHOOL SPORTS COORDINATOR, SURREY



THE PACK SAYS: This gentle yet effective cleanser uses extracts of mango, blueberry and willow bark to purify and decongest the skin, keeping oiliness and breakouts at bay.

YOU SAY: "I followed the instructions by massaging the gel into my skin before wiping it off with a warm, damp flannel. It seemed a bit of an effort, but after a few days I noticed a real difference to my skin. Properly removing the oil build-up has definitely resulted in fewer spots."

MY ONE GREEN BOTTLE
TROUBLESOME SKIN SERUM, £16
SHANNAN SUTHERLAND, 21,
HOSPITALITY STUDENT, IRELAND



THE PACK SAYS: This rapidly absorbed blend is anti-bacterial, anti-inflammatory and will help balance the skin's oil production when massaged into troubled areas morning and evening.

YOU SAY: "As well as having problem skin, I get

eczema on my forehead. I massaged the product into my problem areas for two minutes day and night. I saw a difference after a few hours; after a day, other people were commenting on my improved skin. A definite bathroom essential!"



A clear SOLUTION

With the new range of anti-blemish makeup from Witch, there's a naturally clear answer to your complexion problems...

hen our social lives are busy and our work lives demanding, we don't often have time to research all the different products and cosmetics we should be using on our skin to help it combat daily stresses and strains. Despite this, 64% of us worry about the affect stress can have on our skin*. So isn't it time we found a range of skin-friendly products that can help us battle our different skincare dilemmas and help conceal the evidence?

The new range of Witch Anti-Blemish cosmetics is fragrance-free, oil-free, dermatologically tested and suitable for oily and combination skin. Plus, they contain pure witch hazel extract, a natural astringent and anti-inflammatory that helps to banish blemishes and promote a clear, healthy-looking complexion. This super-efficient range means we no longer have to compromise - with a skin primer, redness relief moisturiser, pressed powder and tinted moisturiser in the range, you don't have to give up products that look after your skin for those that give you a great makeup finish - it's now possible to have both! In a recent survey, 48% of people said preventing blemishes was their most popular wish when it came to improving the benefits of their makeup* - it now appears their wishes have been granted. So you can play hard, work hard and live life to the full... and let your makeup take care of your skin.

· Witch Anti-Blemish cosmetics are available from Boots, Superdrug and Tesco. Visit www.witchskincare.com for more information and a chance to win products from the range.



- Got skin that needs calming? Witch Anti-Blemish Redness Relief Moisturiser. RRP £6.99, helps to target breakouts, soothe the skin and reduce redness. Including avocado and apple extracts, as well as zinc and provitamin B5, it helps to balance your skintone, while calming and conditioning your skin.
- For those who want to help protect their skin and give it a silky-smooth base before layering on makeup (which can also aggravate blemishes), then Witch Anti-Blemish Skin Clearing Primer, RRP £6.99, with liquorice extract, is for you.
- How about skin prone to shine? Use Witch Anti-Blemish Tinted Moisturiser, RRP £5.99. This mattifying little beauty helps prevent blemishes and control shine, while providing even coverage and hydrating your skin.
- Would you like a pressed powder to absorb extra oils? Witch Anti-Blemish Pressed Powder, RRP £4.99, contains antibacterial active properties, so there's no more worry about spreading any nasties. This clever product helps to clarify your skin while keeping it looking shine-free; doing everything you need a powder to do, and more!











I be buying right now?

We love the quirky Jo Malone Limited Edition Tea Fragrance Blends, £34 each. Choose a morning, afternoon or afterdinner tea scent and add Sweet Lemon (fresh) or Sweet Milk (warm and deep) cologne, according to your taste.

I love a strong eye look. What are the best products to use? Urban Decay 24/7 Glide-on Shadow Pencil, £14, is a chubby version of the classic eyeliner that you can use as a fierce eveshadow. Blend it all over the socket before it dries, or wear as a stripe in the crease - it won't budge! Finish with the revolving DiorShow 360 Mascara, £19.50, for the biggest, baddest, curliest lashes imaginable.

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GET THE LONDON LOOK





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That's why Neutrogena created new Multi-Defence,™ our first daily moisturiser proven to protect your skin against the combined effects of your environment.

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Cheryl is wearing natural hair extensions, cared for with Full Restore 5.

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CIRCLES

· Amanda Bell, head makeup artist for Pixi, says, "Avoid the temptation to pile on loads of product. The most flattering option is a little creamy, peach-toned concealer that neutralises the blue tones and erases shadows.'

 "The skin under the eyes is ultra-delicate, so avoid thick or powdery concealers, which tend to show up fine lines.'

"Be wary of overly light-reflective concealers. They make you look like a 'reverse panda' under a camera flash!"

 "Try warming concealer between your fingers to help it blend," says Amanda. Apply with a soft, patting motion, taking it all the way up to the lash line and into the inner corners of your eyes

P: Try looking · COSMO TI down into a hand mirror. It will highlight the darkest areas of shadow you need to focus on.

ZITS AND SCARS

· Kirstin Piggott, Rimmel London makeup artist, says, "Choose a concealer the same shade as your foundation/ skin, or slightly lighter."

"Use a concealer brush to apply in thin layers and then lightly pat with your ingertip to blend into the surrounding skin.'

BEAUTY BIBLE

"When covering up thread veins or scars, use a green corrective base first to help neutralise redness, then follow with a stick concealer." "Liquid concealers are lighter on the skin, cream concealers blend beautifully

and give medium coverage, while stick concealers give the strongest coverage.

 "Mix a tiny bit of moisturiser with your concealer to lighten the consistency or to help it blend if you have dry skin."



These girls are experts at hiding the late nights and breakouts...



BUT NOT TODAY

TO SHOP PAGE

YOU'D NEVER KNOW KATY HAS BAD-SKIN DAYS NO DARK CIRCLES GIRL KATE

POSH SHOWS

Need to know

Does foundation or concealer go on first?

Foundation, so you can see where, or if, you need concealer. Plus it creates a tacky base to help the concealer last longer.

How can I make it last all day?

Always finish with powder to set the concealer. Makeup artists like to dust brightening powder under the eyes.

I don't have any blemishes. Do I still need concealer?

Not necessarily. But everyone looks better with a little under-eye brightener, such as Benefit Ooh La Lift, £15.50.





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With its Dermo Active 3 complex and a range of bath and shower products for every skin type, Sanex is developed by dermatologists to protect, moisturise and restore natural pH balance for glowing, healthy skin.



Pretty gorgeous

Ice ice baby!

For a futuristic fragrance, look no further than Burberry Sport Ice, from £51. It contains ginger, frozen mandarin and



Everything you need to make this month your most beautiful yet



I suffer from problem skin and feel like I've tried everything on the market to get it under control. Any suggestions?

> There's a buzz around First Aid Beauty (aka FAB), the newest skincare range to come out of America. It's designed to combat skin conditions such as redness, breakouts, fine lines and sensitivity, so should have you glowing like J-Lo in no time! From £8.

Perfect polishes

Orly, a favourite of nail experts, lands in Boots this month with a selection of its best-selling shades for only £5 each. Pretty, professional nails at a bargain price - yay!

MAKEUP SECRETS

IN ASSOCIATION WITH MAX FACTOR

METALLIC MAGIC

This season, copper, gold and silver hues make a dazzling combo - and Max Factor's global creative design director Pat McGrath gave eyes some

theatrical metallic drama at the Galliano show. Max Factor's UK ambassador Caroline Barnes (above) shows you how to recreate this sexy, shimmering look...

Stunning eyes need both dark and iridescent colours, and Max Factor Smoky Eye Effect Eye Shadow in Onyx Smoke, £7.99*, makes the crucial blending bit easy. Mark out the socket of the eye using the darker shade.

Highlight the inner-eye corner to add ✓ 'wow'. Try Max Factor Max Effect Dip-In Eye Shadow in Silver Lounge, £5.99*.

Balance out bold eyes with Max Factor Lipfinity Lip Colour in Spiritual, £10.99*. Give lips extra gleam and dab a touch of Masterpiece Colour Precision Eye Shadow in Pearl Beige, £6.99*, onto your Cupid's bow.







Click into OSMO

Spring fashion fever at Cosmopolitan.co.uk – hot new-season styles are just a click away!





GOT A WARDROBE WORRY? Ask the Cosmo community

"I have an interview at Nottingham Uni and have no idea what sort of outfit would be suitable to wear."

CreativeKitty

"Don't panic:) You can't go wrong with smart trousers and a smart top. The interview will be more about you as a person, but to be nicely presented won't do you any harm:) Good luck! x" ERx

Ask your burning fashion questions at cosmopolitan.co.uk/chatroom

The secret of being



What big eyes you have Amanda Seyfried! The Red Riding Hood star on what makes her smile

Happiness is...

PUPPY LOVE

"Most of the time I just want to go home and throw my dog Finn a stick. Can anything be more obvious than throwing a stick? I need to be needed. I'm obsessed with my dog. I just left him and I already want to run back and see him.

He's become my light source and kind of a saviour to a lot of people, a lot of my friends?

LEONARDO DICAPRIO

"At 11, I had a crush on Leonardo DiCaprio. Actually, it wasn't a crush, it was an obsession! I was also obsessed with Richard Dean Anderson from MacGyver and Indiana Jones."

PLANET EARTH

"I've been interested in meteorology for a really long time; since I was young. Since Twister came out, pretty much. And now I'm kind of interested in earthquakes."

Amanda, 25, is

Ryan Phillippe

currently dating

"My taste got way better after high school, and I started listening to indie music, folk and alternative rock. Now I appreciate most music, even rap. At the moment, I'm listening to Ray LaMontagne. I started listening to Joshua Radin after I met him. And I adore Damien Rice. Singer-songwriters are my favourites."

TREADING THE BOARDS

'I did theatre when I was nine and ten, and that was just the beginning of my involvement in acting, my whole interest. It was exciting just to be on stage in front of an audience. It gives you a rush."

ABBA

"My mother didn't partake in the whole Abba phenomenon. As a result, I knew nothing about their music. But I'll tell you, I own every single song now [Amanda starred in Mamma Mia!]. And I definitely listen to them; it makes me happy. And it's actually pretty complex music - their chords, their rhymes and everything."

You * You * You

Amanda admits

with her dog Finn

KEEPING IT REAL

"It's really easy to avoid the tabloids. You just live your life and don't hang out with famous people who are in the tabloids. Don't do anything controversial and be a normal person. Have friends. And get a job and keep working."

Unhappiness is..

SHOWBIZ RIVALRY!

"People do judge you, and there are stupid rivalries. You have to wear the right things, because there are all these girls my age competing for the same roles. They're judging me and I'm judging them. I try not to be that way, but sometimes I am."





Cash & Careers Clinic Interview SPECIAL

How to land your dream job!

t can be difficult to showcase how amazing you are when you're nervous, but *Cosmo*'s here to help. We spoke to the MD of recruitment company Office Angels, David Clubb, for his advice on how to shine in job interviews...

BEFORE

- "Preparation is the key to a successful interview," says David. "Anticipating questions that you may be asked and planning answers will make you feel more confident. You'll be asked questions about work, the job you're being interviewed for and possibly your life outside work."
- "Consider the practicalities the last thing you need is to arrive at the wrong office, or not to have change for the car park."
- "Pay attention to how you look. Your clothes and personal grooming will be a big part of the impression you make."
- "Make sure you get a good night's sleep – it'll help you focus."

DURING

• "The first few minutes of an interview are crucial," says

David. "First impressions count, so start with a firm handshake, use a positive voice and smile. Wait for the interviewer to offer you a seat, and keep enough eye contact throughout the meeting to establish sincerity."

- "When it comes to answering questions, listen carefully to what is being asked of you and think before you answer. Use the 'STAR' technique (Situation, Task, Action, Result) when explaining how you've tackled jobs. Backing up what you say with an example goes a long way."
- "You'll probably be asked if you have any questions to ask the interviewer, and it looks professional to have a couple prepared. They could be about the company or the position."

AFTER

 "Send a brief thank-you email to your interviewer within a day," says David. "Keep it simple – say how much you enjoyed meeting them, confirm that you're still interested in the job and stress what a good fit you are for the role and the organisation."





Karren Brady's BOARDROOM SECRETS



<mark>PART 14</mark> HOW TO BE THE INTERVIEWER

In an interview, it's necessary that each candidate gets a feel for the organisation, because once they've joined, you have as much responsibility to them as they have to you. Be clear on what hours they're expected to work, who with, and what their line of authority is.

Ask practical questions – for example, 'If this was going on in the business, how would you solve it?' Ask each candidate what they know about your business in general, because a lot of people apply for jobs without having done their research. It's a way of finding out if they're meticulous.

I think you know if a person isn't right within 15-20 minutes. But it's also important for other people to give you an opinion on whether a candidate is right. Sometimes the people who impress you most are junior members of staff looking for their next opportunity – so speak to their line managers too.

It's always important that people dress appropriately for an interview. You need to be able to see that they have an understanding of the firm, as well as see their individuality. If you like the look of a candidate, phone people to get references.

I won't employ anybody, regardless of how good they are, unless they have one ingredient: enthusiasm. The next thing I look for is a sense of determination and pride. They want this job, and they want to do it well. Finally, you need to know that they understand the pressures of the workplace.

Think you want my job?

LIEUTENANT VICKI
KAY, 29, is a weapon
engineering officer
in the royal navy.
THE GOOD "No two
days are ever the same,
the role is constantly

challenging and because you move to a different job within the navy every couple of years, there's very little chance of getting bored. You also get to see some rarely visited places in the world, such as South Georgia and Tristan de Cunha [in the south Atlantic], which are beautiful and untouched."

THE BAD "Nearly all of the jobs you will do involve spending some time away from home, whether it's a few months on a deployment or just a few weeks on a training course. It's certainly not a 9-to-5 job, so you will find yourself working long days or even weekends."

STILLINTERESTED?

- An engineering degree is essential if you want to become an engineering officer.
- Join a university royal naval unit or a reserve unit to get a taste of naval life, both working and playing.
- It's important to be confident; have confidence in your own abilities and views.
- The salary starts from £29,587. For more information, visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers.

Fast fact

We spend 188 days of our life making tea for work colleagues. Double that if you work at Cosmo!



NAIL THE RIGHT LOOK





WIN!

BUSINESSWOMAN LIZZIE PENNY SET UP A MARKETING BUSINESS. FUTUREPROOF. WHEN SHE WAS JUST 26. NOW SHE'S OFFERING ONE LUCKY WINNER £1.000-WORTH OF MARKETING TOWARDS A PROJECT. **CAMPAIGN** OR BRAND. SUBMIT YOUR BRIEF AT WWW. FUTUREPROOF. CO.UK, QUOTING THE 'COSMO FREE MARKETING COMP'. •

3Y ANNABELLE LEE. ADDITIONAL REPORTING BY PUNAM VYAS, PHOTOGRAPH. SETTY. *HOW TO GET A JOB YOU'LL LOVE* BY JOHN LEES (£14.99, McGRAW-HILL)





Everyday, everybody, every moment, supple healthy feeling skin.

Moisturising Lotion

LEGS

Check for changes in your veins. If they're bulging and purple, they could be varicose veins. They're not harmful but you can ease them by wearing support stockings or losing weight (if you need to – check with your doctor first). If they're painful, see your doctor.

HEALTH CHECKS to do white you're naked

Whip off your kit and get comfortable for a few minutes – it's time for your head-to-toe

check-up with GP Dr Penny Adams

GDOIN

Cough while you're naked and check out your groin area. If there's a bulge in the crease of your groin as you cough, you could have a hernia.

BIKINI LINE

Red spots on your bikini line could be folliculitis (inflammation of the hair follicles). A doctor can prescribe antifungal or antibacterial medicine for you.

SKIN

- Skin that has suddenly become more pale in colour could be a sign of anaemia.
- Check for rashes. If you have any rashes in your creases – for example, between the folds of your fingers or in your elbow crook – it could be eczema. If there's a rash in your groin area or underarms, it's probably a fungal infection.
- Check for moles at least every six months.
 Look for changes in your moles and freckles, and follow the 'ABCDE' rule that is, look for changes to the asymmetry, border, colour, diameter and elevation of your moles. If you notice anything odd, see your doctor

straightaway.

TEETH

White spots on your teeth are nothing to worry about – they generally mean you had too much fluoride when you were a kid. Your gums should be a nice palepink colour. If they're red, you're not brushing your teeth properly. Check out your tongue too – if it's very shiny or smooth, you could be anaemic.

HAIR

Is your hair thinning? See your doctor if you notice any significant changes. More generally, if you notice you've become hairier all over, this could be a symptom of polycystic ovarian syndrome (PCOS).

HANDS AND NAILS

- Very red palms could be a sign of a skin condition called palmar erythema, which itself is a symptom of liver disease. Changes on your nails are also very important. If the half-moon at the base of your nail changes shape, you could have an iron deficiency. Keep a look-out for horizontal lines across your nails too – this could be a sign of any chronic disease and should be checked out immediately. Vertical ridges are normal.
- If your fingernails are pitted (that is, they have small depressions in them, much like the peel of an orange), you could have a skin condition called psoriasis.
- If your nails are lifting from the nail bed, you could have an overactive thyroid. If they are lifting and the skin underneath is yellow-green in colour, it could be a fungal infection.
- Those little white spots you sometimes see on your nails?
 Don't worry about them they're just a sign of previous trauma to the nails. They don't mean you have a nutritional deficiency. Black spots, however, could mean melanoma, so you should definitely have them checked out.

EYEBROWS

If your eyebrows are thinning, or you're missing the outer half of your brows, you could have a thyroid problem.

EYES

Yellow dots on your eyes, or a yellow ring around your iris, can indicate high cholesterol. If the whites are yellowish, get checked for liver disease. If the red part is pale, you could have anaemia.

.....

If your rib cage

seems higher or more

prominent on one side

than the other, it could

be scoliosis (curvature

of the spine)

BREASTS

Check your breasts every month for changes in size, colour and shape. Use your left hand to feel your right breast and vice versa. Work from the top of the breast, using firmer movements as you move down. Check from your armpit to your cleavage, and from your collarbone to your stomach.

NECK

Check for swelling at the base of your neck at the front. This could be a sign of thyroid disease.

COSMOPOLITAN

Beauty Expert



pointed tip for areas around the nose & eyes for precision blending of concealer



base of the sponge for blending larger areas of the face



Blend Perfection Sponge For manyly trained bundeson application

Introducing the Cosmo Blend Perfection Sponge

This hypoallergenic and latex free blender sponge allows for flawless application of foundation. Using a bouncing or stippling method, it blends make-up to leave a sublime, airbrushed looking finish, with no tell tale lines or visible streaks. Perfection!

Love Cosmox

Superclyus.

superdrug.com

Ellie Lyver, 18, was stunned when she discovered the truth about her illness

y friend's house party was in full swing and everybody was having a great time. I seemed to be the only one desperate to leave. 'I feel sick,' I told my friend apologetically, heading home to bed.

"I hadn't felt well for weeks. I assumed it was because I'd been working hard studying textiles at college in Alton, Hampshire, and enjoying too many late nights. But a few days later, I was watching TV when crippling chest pains shot through me. My left arm went numb, and I was scared I was having a heart attack.

"Rushing to my GP, she diagnosed a chest infection and gave me antibiotics. It seemed strange I'd been in such agony, but I didn't argue. But over the next few days, the pain made it hard to eat - or even get out of bed.

"I went back to my GP, who referred me for an emergency X-ray. 'There's a shadow on your chest, but it's probably just swelling, I was assured at hospital. They didn't sound worried, so I pushed my fears to the back of my mind. But the next morning at college, I got an urgent call from my mum. You have to come home right away. We need to get you to hospital? I didn't ask why - but Mum's tone made me rush home in a panic.

"Admitted to hospital, I tried not to let my imagination run riot. But eventually, a doctor confirmed the one thing I'd never considered. 'We think you have a form of cancer called lymphoma; she told me. 'It's serious? Mum and I looked at each other in blank shock. Surely I was too young to have cancer? I barely even cried, unable to take it

Ellie needed a four-hour operation

> in. 'I've got cancer,' I said, trying to process it. 'Don't say that, Mum begged. But nothing could change what we'd been told.

"A week later I faced a terrifying four-hour op to remove the growth in my chest. A further biopsy had shown my cancer wasn't lymphoma, so they still needed to find out what was wrong.

"Breaking my breast bone, surgeons cut out the tumour, which was pressing on my heart and lungs. When I came round, I was in excruciating pain. A week later, I was sent home, still bed-bound and in agony.

"A few days later, I headed back to the hospital for my follow-up consultation, hoping they'd know at last what was wrong - and that the cancer was gone. Sitting in the waiting room, it struck me that every other nervous face belonged to a middle-aged man. Although it seemed odd, I had bigger things to worry about.

"But I soon found out why when I was hit with a bombshell. 'The tumour in your chest was testicular cancer, the consultant

are still testicular cells explained. My reaction in my chest, so was to giggle, sure it was a mistake. But he told I have to be me how, in the womb, monitored by a foetuses don't develop their particular sexual specialist organs until around 10 weeks. If you're female, cells

Ellie is no longer

embarrassed

'There

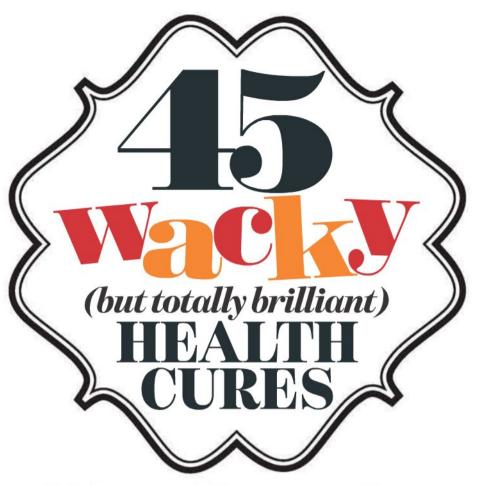
You * You * You

that start as testicles develop into ovaries. But some of these cells got caught in my chest cavity. As I reached adulthood, the cells began to mutate, forming a lump, which was technically testicular cancer.

"My mind whirred and I could barely take it in. On top of all I'd already suffered, I felt like a freak too. How would I ever explain to people what was wrong with me?

"Luckily, those worries paled into insignificance when a scan revealed the testicular cancer had gone. There are still testicular cells in my chest, so I have to be monitored by a specialist, but thankfully there are no long-term health implications. As long as I'm vigilant about any chest pain in the future, there's every chance I'll lead a long and healthy life.

"I'm no longer embarrassed by my brush with testicular cancer - in a way, I feel special that I'm one of only a handful of women worldwide to have suffered from my illness - and beaten it." •



Ugly ingrowns, killer cramps, puffy eyes... You're definitely going to want to hang on to this list of expert-approved fast fixes

You have a splinter

Put a piece of ripe banana skin pulp-side down on the affected area and cover with a bandage. The enzymes from the banana will help draw out the splinter.

Your nose is dripping like a tap

Snort a handful of tepid tap water (add salt if you have some; it will dry nasal passages), then blow your nose. Your nostrils should be clear for a few hours.

Warm up a wet flannel in the microwave for 30 seconds, check the heat, then lay it on your tummy. The discomfort will lessen until your painkillers kick in.

You jam your finger or stub your toe

Straighten out the digit and squeeze it tightly for a minute to stop any swelling.

Your feet reek
Apply baby powder to the soles to dry out perspiration. Covering up with

(clean!) socks will soak up more sweat and block the smell.

6 You feel anxious and your heart is pounding

Gently massage your temples while taking slow, deep breaths to relax yourself quickly.

Your underarms smell, but there's no time for you to take a shower

Head to the Ladies and pat your pits with a paper towel. Dab liquid soap on them to mask odour-causing bacteria.

S You develop a nasty, painful nail

Dip your finger in salted water – it can reduce swelling and the risk of infection.

Making out with your stubbly guy has left you with chin burn

Slather on lotion or petroleum jelly to ease the sting and banish redness. (Just make sure alcohol isn't listed as one of the first three ingredients, since it can make the redness worse.)

You can't stop coughing
Mimic sucking on a hard cough
sweet, creating saliva to coat your throat.

There's an inflamed ingrown hair on your bikini line

Hold a paper towel dipped in cold water on it for a few minutes, or grab an ice cube on the way to the bathroom. Swelling and redness will shrink in 15 minutes.

Your heels hurt from wearing flats
Roll your foot over a water bottle
or drink can for two minutes. It will stretch
your arch, and that blocks heel pain.

You're seeing black spots in your field of vision

It could be a consequence of dehydration or low blood sugar, so drink a full glass of water and eat a piece of fruit.

A zit is about to erupt on your face
Run hot water over a metal spoon
for about 10 seconds, then press the
underside of it on the emerging blemish.
It'll put off the pimple for a couple of hours
and decrease its size once it does show.

Stress has tensed up your neck and shoulders

Relax them by looking ahead, turning your neck 90 degrees to the left, then to the right. Bob your head up and down slowly then tilt it side-to-side. Repeat 10 times.

Allergies have brought on itchy eyes
Splash cool water on them. The
itchiness may come from pollen stuck in
your eye, and water will rinse it out.

You're nervous before a date
Do something mundane, such as
deleting photos from your phone or writing
a grocery list. Boring tasks cancel out anxiety

Many cases of bad breath are due to dehydration, so down two glasses of water. If the stink is from a pungent meal, try chewing parsley – it contains a natural breath-freshening chemical.

You are totally hung-over and feel like you're going to be sick

Eat or drink anything with ginger in it, such as ginger ale or chocolate ginger, since it calms your stomach.

You're about to nod off in a meeting
Breathe in deeply through your
mouth. It does the same thing as yawning
- sends oxygen to the brain - without
risking dirty looks from your boss.

You notice dandruff
Massage your scalp for a few
minutes to release natural oils that will
prevent further flaking.

You wake up with puffy eyes Hold ice cubes wrapped in paper towels on your eyelids for one minute.

You burnt your forehead with straighteners or a curling iron Coat the burn with honey, an antibacterial, anti-inflammatory agent that aids healing.

A crushing migraine strikes Go into a totally dark, quiet room and shut your eyes for 30 minutes Sensitivity to light and sound can make a migraine worse, so you'll stave off any additional throbbing until painkillers kick in.

You nick yourself shaving Cover the cut with baby powder (or powder bronzer) to facilitate a blood clot.

Place a piece of tape over the emerging blister to create a barrier between it and the inside of your shoe.

You bit the inside of your cheek Drink a cup of cooled raspberryleaf tea, holding each gulp in your mouth for a minute. Do this twice again later in

An ice cube in a tissue gently after 30 seconds

You can feel an ominous pressure headache coming on Put a metal spoon in iced water or the freezer until it's cold to the touch. Press it to the top of your mouth for

Your chest is congested
Steam some onions and stand over them as they're heating. Breathing in the sulphuric acid will break up mucus.

Go to the bathroom, get on your hands and knees with your butt in the air, and rock back and forth until the gas is,

Your teeth feel mucky but you don't have a toothbrush A crunchy fruit or veg, like an apple or

um, released.

carrot, helps clean off plaque. A painful ingrown toenail

is digging into your skin Fold up a piece of sticky tape two times, and wedge it between the toe and the nail.

Your bikini line is red after a wax Ice it for a few minutes. The skin will stay red from the cold but, after it warms up, the redness should be gone.



Baby powder

* Soaks up sweat and odour from your pits, cleavage or crotch. * Degreases your hair. * Eases irritation from thigh rubbing after walking around in a skirt all day. 🛠 Helps keep your sheets cool and dry if you're hooking up on a hot night. 🛠 Stops a cut from bleeding. 🤸

Sellotape

🜟 Doubles as a bandage. 🜟 Thwarts ingrown-nail pain. Prevents nipple chafing from the inside of your bra. 😕 Gives slippery shoes traction (use double-sided). **

35 You have heartburn Sit still with your back very straight for a few minutes. It'll stop the burn getting worse, and ease the pain.

26 Your eyes are bloodshot Close your eyes and splash cold water on them to shrink blood vessels ASAP.

You feel tipsy and don't want to be

Eat something greasy, like chips. The fat lines your stomach, slows alcohol absorption and helps sober you up.

While working out, a muscle gets shaky

Stop exercising, drink a cup of water and massage the muscle until it relaxes.

You get a nosebleed Pinch the bridge of your nose, which halts blood flow. Then try placing a torn piece of a brown paper bag between your top lip and gum.

Your ear canal itches Moisture is probably trapped inside. Place a drop of half vinegar and half water just inside the ear to restore its natural pH.

> You have a urinarytract infection

Ease symptoms until you can see a GP by drinking cranberry juice (it keeps UTI bacteria from sticking to the bladder and also reduces pain).

12 You're itchy from mosquito bites

Mint toothpaste will deaden the itching.

43 You feel a raging cold sore coming on

Put ice on the area for two minutes. It won't stop the blister from appearing, but the chill should delay it.

A toothache is making vou miserable

To kill the pain, try gargling with salt water for 30 seconds.

You get a stitch while you're running

Slow to a walk, put your hands above your head and take a few deep breaths. •



PROBLEM PERIODS

Research has found that 89% of us suffer painful periods, with half that number regularly left doubled over in pain because of them. Here are three ways to fight back.

Based on the same TENS technology women use when they are in labour, the Lloyds Pharmacy Period Pain Reliever (£29.99) clips on your underwear and passes gentle electrical signals through the pain nerves, blocking signals from the cramps.

Period pains are caused by a substance called prostaglandin, which makes the womb contract, but GP Dr Roger Henderson says that ibuprofen helps to block the production of it. Try Anadin's new Liquifast Effervescent Ibuprofen (£3.49), which can work up to four times faster than normal pills.

If you take the Pill, skip your seven-day break. "It's the best way to beat period problems as it means you don't have a period every month," says GP Dr Caroline Cooper. Speak to your doctor about it first, though.

"This is the only thing that's getting in bed with me at the moment"

You * You * You



March is Ovarian Cancer Awareness month, and The Eve Appeal would like you to get together with your mates and have a tea party to raise money for research. If you fancy putting your cupcake skills to the test, visit www.eveappeal.org.uk.



For a healthier, happier you



This month, Cosmo's Fiona Cowood tries the Power Plate Muffin-Top Workout

your core. You do 25 minutes of planks, crunches and other tummy trimmers, all on a Power Plate machine. I'd never used a Power Plate before but I can see why people get hooked on it! After just three sessions, I definitely felt that my stomach was tighter. It's not cheap but if you haven't got much time, then I'd say it's the perfect way to get results fast."

This is a workout that targets

To find your nearest Power Plate studio, visit www.power plate.com. Classes start at £20 for 25 minutes.

What is your posture age?

ccording to a recent study, the average person in the UK has a back that acts eight years older than it actually is. So how can you find out your back age? Read through this list, and for all the things you do regularly, add a year to your actual age:

- ◆ Spend more than three hours a day on a desktop computer
- ◆ Spend more than one hour on a laptop or on your phone
- ◆ Carry a bag over one shoulder
- ◆ Sleep on more than one pillow
- Look at the floor as you walk

- ◆ Cross your legs when you sit
- ◆ Wear heels more than 2ins high for more than two hours

If your score has left you in fear for your back, don't panic. "There are easy steps that can help reduce your posture age," says Joshua Wies of the MBT Academy, which specialises in 'physiological footwear: "Like sitting on chairs that support your back when you're online rather than slumping over a laptop. If you sit at a desk, get up and walk about often – and never cross your legs while you sit." Find more tips and a fuller version of the test at www.postureage.com.



BY HELEN FOSTER, PHOTOGRAPHS GETTY, ISTOCKPHOTO.COM, ALAMY





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PHOTOGRAPH SCOPE BEAUTY, "NOT AVAILABLE WITH SUBSCRIPTION COPIES OR IN SOME AREAS



VIRGIN JOGGER?

Cosmo-endorsed blogger Muireann Carey-Campbell admits she wouldn't have so much as run for a bus this time last year. But now, after months of training, she's running the Paris Half Marathon with 19 other girls to raise money for Refuge. If you need a bit of a push to get out there and start running, follow her advice:

Get in gear. "First off, go to a running shop and get a 'gait analysis' done. This helps to determine the best type of trainer for your running style to give you proper support. Speaking of support, invest in a good sports bra. Strap those puppies down!"

Run in packs. "Jogging can be scary on your own, but ParkRun (Parkrun.com)

has running groups all over the country and is a great free option for all levels."

Set a goal. "Sign up for a race, set a training schedule and put it out to the universe via Facebook or Twitter. It's less easy to get out of training when all your friends are asking you about it."

Tune up. "If you start to flag, listen to an inspirational song on your iPod. I have the *Rocky* theme tune on mine!"

Mix it up. "Do a weekly Pilates class to keep you supple for running. Or try a boxing class – great cardio for running stamina, plus you get to punch things!"

• Follow Muireann's Cosmo-Blog-Awardwinning musings at www.bangsandabun.com. Donate to her run at www.justgiving.com/ teambangsontherun

SHHH! CELEB SECRET

How did Lady Gaga get all that energy for her world tour? Celeb trainer Harley Pasternak '5-factorised' the tour. His 5-factor diet is based on three meals and two snacks daily. The good news? You get one diet 'cheat day' a week! Go to www.5factor.com.



TONED TO PERFECTION

In association with maxitone

'I TRANSFORMED MY SIZE-18 BODY - AND MY LIFE!'

hen Laura Muirhead, 28, from Edinburgh, flicked through her holiday snaps two years ago, she was shocked into taking action: at size 18, she hated how her body looked

her body looked. Terrified of the gym at first, Laura gradually changed her lifestyle with the help of Maxitone weight-loss and toning products.

Now she's transformed herself into a toned and taut size 8. Here's how she did it:

"I started to eat more healthily, using Maxitone products to stop me getting hungry and to curb my cravings, and the weight began to drop off. I joined the gym and did regular cardio and weight training, and I gradually got slimmer and

more toned.
Never think you can't get the body you want – you can. Keep at it and when you have a bad day, it's OK.
Just wake up the next day and get back on track."



TRYIN!

You could further help your weight loss with Maxitone's new meal-replacement supplement, Sculptress Diet (for info go to

Maxitone.com/sculptressdiet)
- and this month we're giving
away 10 Sculptress Diet tubs
and shakers, worth around
£30! For your chance to win, go

to Cosmopolitan.co.uk/sculptressdiet before 14 April 2011. Terms and conditions apply (see website).



Designer doubles

A crop of floral buys for an on-trend burst of spring... Va-va-bloom!









Cosmo

Whether you rope in all your neighbours or host your homage to Wills and Kate in the back garden, celebrate the royal wedding the only way us Brits know how... streeeeet party!

Picnic feast

If you just want to put on a little spread, get everyone to make their picnic speciality. People love anything with a retro twist, so think sausage rolls, crust-free cucumber sandwiches (make sure you lightly butter your bread to the edge to avoid the bread going soggy), cheese and pineapple cubes on a stick (seriously, people will be squealing!)...

Curry favour

Fancy a proper sit-down meal? Get each house (or friend) to make a huge pot of their speciality curry - eq. Thai green, tikka masala, butter chicken - it's the

perfect sharing food and will bring about much debate over whose is best... and hottest!

Barbie-off

Get seven or eight households to dust off their BBQs, pick hotdogs, chicken or burgers and get



cooking. Eeeasy. Oh, and make sure one BBQ is dedicated to vegetarian food. Fancy going the whole hog (ahem)? If you've got enough neighbours/friends to chip in, you can hire a hog roast from £495 from www.spittingpig.co.uk.

Pimms o'clock

For a classic Pimms - whether it's straight into the glass or in big jugs - mix up in the following ratio: two parts lemonade to one part Pimms. Then add plenty of chopped orange, lemon, apple, cucumber and sprigs of mint.

If you want to add some fire to your Pimms, try the following: five parts lemonade, two parts Pimms, one part gin.

The king of British desserts and perfect for big groups - this recipe serves six, so just multiply according to numbers.

Ingredients

300g Madeira or sponge cake, halved and cut into thick slices

300g fresh strawberries, sliced 100g fresh raspberries

6 tbsp sweet sherry

500ml thick ready-made custard 500ml double or whipping cream, softly whipped

Handful of flaked almonds, toasted

- 1. Spread the jam over the cake slices, then use to line the bottom of a large glass dish.
- 2. Layer the strawberries (keep a few for decoration) and raspberries evenly over the cake. Press lightly with a fork to release the juices, then sprinkle with the sherry.
- 3. Spoon over the custard in a thick layer and top with a thick layer of whipped cream.
- 4. Decorate with the reserved strawberry slices and the flaked almonds.

ITS ALL ABOUT THE BUNTING

Whether you want to go all-out patriotic or super-stylish, here are Cosmo's favourites

Shabby-chic cotton Union Jack bunting, £11.25 for 4.5m from www.cotton bunting.co.uk.



Vintage sari bunting, £34.99 for 3.8m from highstreet.com.

Cath Kidston bunting to hire, from £15 for 10m from bunting.co.uk





Where to shop this month

Fashion

Accessorize (www.accessorize.com) Alice by Temperley (www.alicebytemperley.com) Anglomania 020 7439 1109 Ash 020 7323 1020 Asos (www.asos.com) B Banana Republic (www bananarepublic.co.uk) Beyond Retro 020 7729 9001 Boohoo (boohoo.com) C Carvela (www.kurtgeiger. com) Chie Mihara (www.chiemihara.com) Christian Louboutin 020 7491 0033 Cornelia James (www. corneliaiames.com) D Debenhams (www. debenhams.com) Dents (www.dents.co.uk) Disaya (www.disaya.com) DKNY Jeans (www.dknyjeans com) Dorothy Perkins (www.dorothyperkins.com) Dune (www.dune.co.uk) F Fiorelli (www.fiorelli.com) Fratelli Rossetti (www.fratellirossetti.com) Fred Perry (www.fredperry.com) French Connection (www. frenchconnection.com) Furla (www.furla.com) G George 0800 952 1010 Gina Couture (www.gina couture.com) Go Jewellery (www.go-jewellery.com) H H&M (www.hm.com) Hackett (www.hackett.com) Helen Kaminski (www.helenkaminski.com) Hilfiger Denim (www.tommyhilfiger.com) House Of Fraser (www.houseoffraser.co.uk) J Shoes 01858 468123 Jacey Withers (www.iaceywithers.com) Jaeger (www.jaeger.co.uk) Jeepers Peepers (www.jeepers peepers.co.uk) Jimmy Choo (www.jimmychoo.com) K Kate Kuba (www.katekuba.co.uk) Kate Sheridan ww.katesheridan.com) Killah (www.killah.com) Kurt Geiger (www.kurtgeiger.com) L Laura Ashley (www.lauraashley.com) Lipsy (www.lipsy.co.uk) LK Bennett (www.lkbennett.com) Lulu Guinness (www. luluguinness.com) M Mango (www.mango.com) Marks & Spencer (www.marksandspencer.com) Matalan (www.matalan.co.uk) Mimi Holliday (www. damaris.co.uk) Mina UK (www.minauk.com) Mischa Barton (www.mischabartonhandbags.com) Missguided (www.missguided.co.uk) Miss Selfridge (www.missselfridge.com) Miss Sixty (www.misssixty. com) Monsoon (www.monsoon.co.uk) Mulberry (www.mulberry.com) My Tights (www.mytights. com) N Next (www.next.co.uk) Nine West (www. ninewest.com) NW3 (www.hobbs.co.uk) O Odeon 01706 212512 Office (www.office.co.uk) Oli (www.ofi. co.uk) Own The Runway (www.owntherunw P Paul & Joe (www.paulandioe.com) Peacocks (www.peacocks.co.uk) Pedro Garcia (www. pedrogarcia.com) Pied A Terre (www.piedaterre com) Prada 020 7647 5000 Pretty Ballerinas (www.prettyballerinas.com) R Rare (www. rarefashion.co.uk) Ravel (www.ravel.shoes.barratts. co.uk) Rebecca Taylor (www.rebeccataylor.com) Reiss (www.reissonline.com) Republic (www. republic.co.uk) River Island (www.riverisland.com) Rupert Sanderson (www.rupertsanderson.com) S Sara Berman (www.saraberman.com) Schuh (www.schuh.co.uk) Select (www.selectfashion.co.uk) Soloro 0116 238 7090 Swarovski (www.swarovsk com) T Tatty Devine (www.tattydevine.com) Ted Baker (www.tedbaker.com) Thomas Sabo (www. thomassabo.com) Tommy Hilfiger (www.uk.tommy. com) Topman (www.topshop.com) Topshop (www. topman.com) U Unisa 020 7439 4366 V Very (www. very.co.uk) Vivienne Westwood (www.vivie westwood.co.uk) W Wallis (www.wallis.co.uk) Warehouse (www.warehouse.co.uk) Wildfox (www.wildfoxcouture.com)

Beauty

A Accessorize (www.accessorize.com) All For Eve (www.beautique.com) Aromatherapy Associates 020 8569 7030 Aveeno 0845 601226 Avon (www. avonshop.co.uk) B Barry M (www.barrym.com)

Beautyblender (www.beautyblender.co.uk) Benefit (www.benefitcosmetics.co.uk) **Bobbi Brown** 0870 034 2566 **Boots Essentials** 08450 708090 **Bourjois** 0800 269836 Braun 0800 783 7010 Burberry 0845 769 7072 C Carmex 08450 708090 Chanel 020

7493 3836 Clarins 0800 036 3558 Clinique (www. clinique.co.uk) Collection 2000 08450 708090 Comfort Zone (www.the-comfort-zone.co.uk) Cosmetics À La Carte (www.cosmeticsalacarte. com) D Daniel Sandler (www.beautique.com) Dermalogica (www.dermalogica.com) Dior 020 7172 0172 Diptyque 020 7727 8673 Dolce & Gabbana (www.harrods.com) Donna Karan (www. harrods.com) Dove (www.dove.com) Dr Nick Lowe (www.drnicklowe.com) Dr Organic (www.drorganic. co.uk) E Elemis (www.elemis.com) Elf (www.eyeslips face.co.uk) Elizabeth Arden 08450 708090 Emma Hardie (www.emmahardie.com) Estée Lauder 0870 034 2566 Eucerin 08450 708090 Eveko (www eyeko.com) F Famous (www.superdrug.com) Fekkai (www.spacenk.co.uk) Filthy Gorgeous (ww debenhams.com) First Aid Beauty 0845 124 4545 G Good Things 08450 708090 Goodworks (www. goodworksaromatherapy.com) Giorgio Armani 020 7201 8687 Givenchy 01932 233824 Guerlain 01932 233887 I Inika (www.inikacosmetics.co.uk) Issey Miyake (www.houseoffraser.co.uk) J John Frieda 08450 708090 Jo Malone (www.jomalone.co.uk) K Kenzo (www.houseoffraser.co.uk) Kérastase 0800 316 4400 Klorane (www.klorane.com) Korres 020 7581 6455 L Lancôme (www.lancome.co.uk) La Roche-Posay 0800 055 6822 Laura Mercier (www. spacenk.co.uk) Lee Stafford 08450 708090 Lipstick Queen (www.spacenk.co.uk) Liz Earle (www.lizearle. com) L'Oréal Paris 08450 708090 M Mac (www. maccosmetics.co.uk) Mama Mio (www.mamamio. com) Marc Jacobs (www.debenhams.com) Marks & Spencer (www.marksandspencer.com) Max Factor (www.maxfactor.co.uk) Maybelline (www maybelline.co.uk) MeMeMe (www.superdrug.com) Mvface (www.mvfacecosmetics.com) MvLash (www.mylash.org) My One Green Bottle (www. myonegreenbottle.co.uk) N Nars (www. narscosmetics.co.uk) Nivea 08450 708090 No7 08450 708090 Ojon (www.ojon.co.uk) Ole Henriksen at Harvey Nichols 0845 604 1888 Origins (www.origins.co.uk) Orly 08450 708090 P Pantene 08450 708090 Paul & Joe (www.paul-joe-beaute. com) Per-fékt (www.perfektbeauty.com) Pixi (www. pixibeauty.co.uk) R Ren (www.renskincare.com) Revion (www.revion.com) Rimmel (www.rimmellondon.com) Ruby & Millie 08450 708090 RMK (www.asos.com) S Sarah Chapman (www.spacenk co.uk) Sebastian (www.sebastianprofessional.com) Shu Uemura (www.spacenk.co.uk) Sleek (www. superdrug.com) Smashbox (www.debenhams.co.uk) Soap & Glory 08450 708090 Swarovski 020 7307 6700 T Tangle Teezer (www.tangleteezer.com) The Body Shop (www.thebodyshop.co.uk) The Doctor Brand (www.thedoctorbrand.co.uk) The Makeup Store (www.themakeupstore.se) Tom Ford 0870 034 2566 **Trevor Sorbie** 08450 708090 **Trilogy** 01403 786035 **U Urban Decay** (www.debenhams. com) V Venus 08450 708090 W W7 (www. faithcosmetics coluk) Wella Professional (www wellaprofessionals.co.uk) X Xen Tan (www.xen-tan. co.uk) Y YSL 01444 255 700

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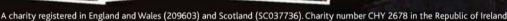
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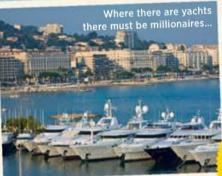
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A-LIST GETAWAY

Every year I'm envious when I see pics of the stars descending on Cannes in the south of France for the famous film festival; I want to be one of the bikinical girls hanging out with George and Brad on a mega yacht! So when a friend suggested heading down there just before the film festival, I jumped at the chance. We may have travelled there by easyJet, but I got my first taste of celeb-style treatment with a private helicopter ride to our fabulous five-star hotel, the Martinez, where Leonardo DiCaprio and Mariah Carey stay during the festival.

STAR-SPOTTING

The place to see and be seen is Promenade de la Croisette, a palm-tree-lined avenue that stretches nearly 3km alongside the beach. Heading towards the old town, the views of the Med to my left were breathtaking... but the boutiques to my right (Chanel, Valentino et al) were just as alluring! All the way along are swanky restaurants, such as La Belle Otero, where you may catch a glimpse of festival regulars such as Penélope Cruz and Charlize Theron. Across the road is the million-dollar-yacht-lined marina, where celebs including P. Diddy, George Clooney and Bruce Willis moor after sailing in from St Tropez, where they stay at Hotel Byblos.

NO PHOTOS, PLEASE

To emulate the stars, go on a boat trip along the Riviera and around the islands. It's so relaxing as you catch some rays and take in

the views. Pay a visit to Île Sainte-Marguerite, which is famous for its fortress prison, where the 'Man in the Iron Mask' was allegedly held in the 17th century. Or drop in on the monks on the island of Saint-Honorat,

> where you can enjoy a wine-tasting session; I got a guided tour of their vineyard and winery, and sampled their divine Pinot Noir straight from the keg!

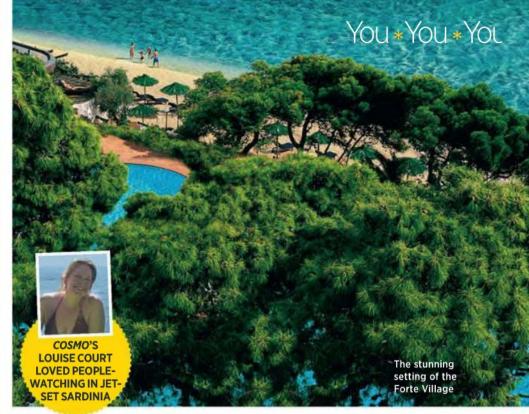
HOT HOTEL

The art-deco Hotel Martinez attracts lots of big names during the film festival and, from the moment I arrived, I was treated like a princess. After checking into my suite, I was whisked to Spa Martinez for a massage - 70 minutes of bliss! The hotel boasts three amazing eateries: Zplage, a beachfront bar, Le Relais, a poolside cafe, and, if you want to push the boat out, La Palme d'Or, a two-Michelin-star restaurant. Here you can sit on a balcony with panoramic views - it's a renowned people-watching spot - and fellow diners might include the likes of Diane Kruger and J-Lo. I was served a delicious eight-course meal, including a chocolate handbag for dessert! For something more lowkey, the bartender in the glitzy L'Amiral Bar will give you a mojito class - and will make them as strong as you like (mine was pretty intoxicating!).

GO THERE

Concorde Best Deal (concorde-hotels.com/martinez) is from £185 per night for two people, inc breakfast, in a superior room (two nights minimum). Flights from Manchester to Nice from £129.21 (www.expedia.co.uk) or London Gatwick to Nice from £69.17 (www.easyjet.com).





INTERNATIONAL JET SET

Was it the moment tennis legend Pat Cash lay down on the sunbed next to me? Or when the rich Russian's wife climbed into the spa pool where I was relaxing, with the most perfect pair of (I'm assuming silicone) breasts I've ever seen? Or possibly as I received personal, hand-delivered invites from Chanel and Bulgari to have a glass of champagne and the chance to view their new watch collections? It's hard to know the moment I felt like I'd joined, for a week, the international jet set at the five-star Forte Village in Sardinia (which has held the title of World's Leading Resort for 12 years). I couldn't stop pinching myself.

HOT HOTEL

Aston Martins and Ferraris sat at the main entrance as we were taken by a motorised buggy through the immaculate gardens to our bungalow – where I could happily have lived forever. It was huge, with state-of-theart TVs, a giant bed, crisp white linen and glorious bathrooms with views of our own garden and terrace. Just a short walk away is a stunning beach, with one of 21 restaurants looking out over paradise. The toughest decisions of the day were what pool to sit at and where to eat. Had we had enough lobster and caviar? Maybe we should book into the Gordon Ramsay restaurant... No wonder this is where the rich and famous stay - pop stars, sportsmen, all guarding their privacy. I had a lot of fun people watching - especially the women, clad in designer gear from their beach shoes to the Louboutins they wore for dinner. It was like Knightsbridge in a beachside resort.

STARTREATMENT

And when all this became too tiring, there was the spa... This was not just a sweetsmelling home of treatments, but also where the world's top footballers, including the England national team, have been to get in tip-top condition. The Thalassotherapy spa is extraordinary. Built into a hill, it offers six outdoor baths of varying temperatures and salinity. You start at the top and work your way down. It beats stress and cellulite, while boosting your well-being. Some are warmer than a bath and so rich in texture, the water feels silky - others include hydromassage and mini waterfalls. By the time you reach the bottom, you feel an extraordinary combination of relaxation and energy.

MILLIONAIRES'PLAYGROUND

If you're energetic, there are tennis courts with top coaches, a putting green, sailing, basketball, volleyball, windsurfing, aerobics, waterskiing, scuba diving, horse riding, a go-kart track, a Chelsea soccer school and a bowling alley. And, of course, a nightclub. If shopping is your sport, your credit card needs to be on red alert. Viktor & Rolf, Marc Jacobs, Moschino, Dior and Gucci beckon. There are no bargain souvenirs – you will, however, come home with a tan and an insight into a world of divine luxury.

GO THERE

Sardatur Holidays offers seven nights from £992pp, based on two adults sharing a double room at half-board at Il Villaggio. Cost includes return flights from Heathrow to Cagliari with BA, and transfers. Call 020 8940 8399 (www.sardatur-holidays.co.uk).

COSMOSTTOLOGY With Cosmo's psychic astrologer Jessica Adams SY



Taurus 20 APR-20 MAY

You refuse to discuss an X-rated topic. Part of your home needs a clean-up. A useless work or university colleague will go on holiday or leave. A man with a sporting connection is sincere. Watch your step in a subject you know little about; get back-up. For more on your X factor, call 0906 757 3883*

Gemini 21 MAY-20 JUNE

A group you're part of will take off soon, with some effort. An exam or work challenge will pay off. Find out why a friend turned down an offer; it affects you too. A man you like is hard to get close to; studying his male friends will teach you a lot. For more on that group, call 0906 757 3884*

Cancer 21 JUNE-22 JULY

The minefield in your personal life requires patience. A touchy woman will be forgotten by August. Finances look flat; check better card-interest rates and second-income sources. An experimental style change turns out to be a keeper!

For more on a new job, call 0906 757 3885*

Leo 23 JULY-22 AUG

Europe beckons. A married woman reveals her (surprising) true feelings. Someone who hasn't been there for you will change if you're honest. A work situation needs care, but you can create success; it's linked to the colour red.

For more on Europe, call 0906 757 3886*

Virgo 23 AUG-22 SEP

You have a secret you'll reveal in September. Your bank has options you didn't know about, or a rival one has a better offer. A friend finally gets lucky. A sister figure enjoys inspiring work success. A health issue needs addressing on a deeper level. For more on the bank, call 0906 757 3887*

Libra 23 SEP-22 OCT

A past lover has much to teach you, if you think back. A tricky work or uni contact will be less so after a life change. A cheap (or free) car is coming your way. A holiday destination you disliked last time has more to offer now; someone close wants to go too. For more on your ex, call 0906 757 3888*

Scorpio 23 OCT-21 NOV

Changes to your job or course give you more free time. A man who should be in the army is in your life – give him his marching orders. A clueless female needs your help. A person from your past who meant a lot is back, and you don't care. For more on your job, call 0906 757 3889*

Sagittarius 22 NOV-21 DEC You make overdue changes to your sex life. A man who believes he is right will be proved wrong. Stop trying to be perfect; instead, appreciate how much your mistakes have given you. Good news comes in a package marked 'P'.

For more on relationships, call 0906 757 3890*

Capricorn 22 DEC-19 JAN

A parent has something special to pass on. You also have a fascinating excuse to take time off work. A woman who was keen to cooperate months ago is less so, but you can change it. Don't overlook a man who is sexually shy or tongue-tied. For more on your parents, call 0906 757 3891*

Aquarius 20 JAN-18 FEB

Brilliant notions make you shine. A rival tries to keep up but can't. Swimming, yoga or other exercise switches you on sexually. Your best bet with a difficult work situation is to keep slogging. Going abroad? Watch the exchange rates.

For more on your genius plans, call 0906 757 3880*

Pisces 19 FEB-19 MAR

New money tactics have a huge impact. A family member needs time and space. A website helps with a fashion issue. A man who has no idea of the rules tempts you again; he's into toys, or could be if you suggest it. Music re-enters your life.

For more on your cash flow, call 0906 757 3881*

Talk to a live psychic on 0906 400 1042" Text a psychic on COSMO 87776"

*Lines can be reached by callers in the UK/Channel Islands only. Calls cost 77p a minute and last no more than 4 minutes 30 seconds. **Calls cost £1.53 a minute from BT landlines. All calls may cost more from mobiles or some networks. Callers must be 18+. Calls are recorded for your protection and regulated by PPP. Customer Service: 0845 270 8302 (office hours). ***Each text message received costs £1.50 plus your normal network charge. You will receive one text message response per question. Available across all networks. Services provided by Telecom Express Ltd WIB 2AG.



Super spring mini-break from just £129 per couple

Enjoy a chilled two-night getaway with your man or BFF – including a three-course dinner on your first night

inter's finally over, and it's time to blow away the cobwebs and make the most of the longer days.

So what better way than with a spring mini-break – especially when you can choose from any of 40 superb Ramada Jarvis hotels across the country?

Pick a city destination and hit the shops, or just chill out in the stunning surroundings of one of Ramada's Country Collection hotels. Wherever you choose, with a great range of bars and restaurants, you can easily spend your time relaxing, wining and dining (go on, you know you can manage it!). If you'd like to weave some activity into all of

this, 19 of the hotels have top-class leisure and spa facilities.

Perfect for a romantic interlude with your man, or the chance to catch up on the gossip with a friend, this getaway costs from £129 per couple for two nights' bed and breakfast,

with a three-course dinner on your first night. And you could save an extra £10 by booking online.

Inviting.

This deal is on offer every night until 5 June 2011, so why not start planning that much-needed escape right now?

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Bristol (2), Swansea, Gloucester HEART OF ENGLAND: Kidderminster, Leicester,
Birmingham/Sutton Coldfield, Solihull/Birmingham, Burton-upon-Trent, Norwich
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Bolton SCOTLAND: Ayr, Edinburgh, Glasgow (2), Inverness, Livingston, Perth

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PHOTOGRAPH CAMERA PRESS

Terms & Conditions Prices are based on two people sharing a standard room for two consecutive nights; including dinner on the first night and breakfast on both mornings. Prices quoted are 'from' rates, which fluctuate depending upon availability and demand at any given time. Dinner offered is the three-course table d'hôte menu or an allocation of £20 will be offered from the à la carte menu. Offer does not apply to room service. Up to two children under the age of 16 years stay and eat breakfast for FREE when sharing a room with two paying adults, subject to the availability of suitable family rooms. All other meals for children are charged as taken. Children staying in their own room pay the full promotional rate. Offer is valid until 5 June 2011. All bookings are payable in advance, non-changeable and non-refundable. The offer is subject to availability and cannot be combined with any other offer, programme or applied to existing bookings. Full Ramada Jarvis terms and conditions apply and are available upon request and online at www.ramadajarvis.co.uk. "Calls to 0844 numbers are charged at 5p per minute from a standard ET line. Calls from mobile networks may vary depending upon your tariff. Lines are open daily from 7am to 11pm.

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TOP 20 MUST-DO TRIPS

It's a beautiful world out there, packed full of iconic sights, incredible cultures and roads that should be travelled. Intrepid Travel has scoured the globe and compiled a list of Top 20 must-do experiences based on feedback from the people whose opinion matters most - travellers. From riding an elephant through the jungles of northern Thailand to drifting along the Nile on a traditional felucca, discover the Top 20 travel adventures everyone should experience in their lifetime. And if you can't wait to add them to your travel list, you can make big savings on all 20 trips when you book before 31 March.

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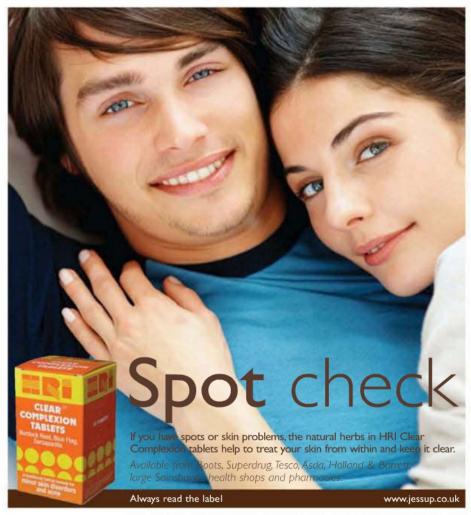
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Beware of wearing loose-fitting clothes – unless you want pregnancy rumours.

Never go anywhere without a yoga mat, bottle of water and Starbucks cup.

Make a dress out of lettuce, shoes from muffins and a hat from pizza for that Gaga look. Whenever anyone asks you about your boyfriend, look uncomfortable and claim, "We're just good friends."

Celebrate bad bikini snaps – they'll be perfect as 'before' shots for your fitness DVD. 6

Any male who isn't your boyfriend will henceforth be tagged as a 'mystery man' on Facebook (even if he's your brother).

After telling friends about your wild Saturday night, add the words, 'an insider alleged'.

When out shopping, walk as close as possible to the nearest burly man. People will assume he's your bodyguard.

Regularly pull out of commitments citing exhaustion, then ensu

Regularly pull out of commitments citing 'exhaustion', then ensure you're pictured falling out of a club at 1am on your friend's Facebook page.

Only ever pop out to buy your essentials in pyjamas, Uggs, sunglasses and a baseball cap.

BY ROSIE MULLENDER. PHOTOGRAPH ARTHUR ELGORT/TRUNKARCHIVE.COM

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